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Dana Heupel



Good government advocate steps down

by Dana Heupel

The activist the *Chicago Tribune* once described as “the state’s most vocal advocate for good government” is stepping down after heading the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform since its founding in 1997.

Cynthia Canary earned that label by being “a tireless worker and leader ... the inside and outside person” for her organization, says Kent Redfield, director of the Sunshine Project campaign contribution database and a longtime colleague and friend. “She’s been the very public face of campaign-finance and ethics reform,” and the ICPR has been “the driving force for all of the changes that have taken place in money in politics and ethics,” he says.

“Change is good,” Canary says about her leaving. “At a certain point, I think it’s important for founding executive directors to move aside. Otherwise, organizations just get imbued with the idiosyncratic nature of their founders.” Her departure comes in the wake of “a number of big successes” by the ICPR and other reform groups. Those include this year’s first-ever

limits on campaign contributions, other comprehensive ethics reforms enacted in 2005 and the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act in 2003.

“I think the accomplishments are amazing, given where we were in the early 1990s,” says Redfield, an emeritus political scientist at the University of Illinois Springfield. Before the reforms, Illinois was a virtual Wild West, where contributors could donate any amount to any state or local candidates at any time.

Canary also points proudly to “how integral and established online campaign disclosure is in this state. We’ve gone from a place where no information was easily available to one where at the flick of a couple of buttons, people can really find out what’s going on.” That has led to a “sea change in political reporting, particularly during elections, where the fourth paragraph is, ‘This is where the money comes from.’

“More broadly,” she says, “we’ve been able in some small way to give voice to people who want to participate in the system, who want to

believe that government is responsive, be it with transparency, with open meetings, with redistricting. So I think that creating a channel for engagement has been very important.”

The Illinois Campaign for Political Reform had its origins in the mid-1990s, when the Joyce Foundation awarded *Illinois Issues* a grant to assemble a task force to study campaign finance reforms. After the task force issued recommendations, the Joyce Foundation asked Canary, then executive director of the Illinois League of Women Voters, to create a proposal for a new organization to look at money in politics “with some vigor to make sure it didn’t end up a report on a shelf,” Canary says. The ICPR was founded by former U.S. Sen. Paul Simon and former Illinois Lt. Gov. Robert Kustra, and Canary became its first executive director.

“We got to work trying to convene people to talk about this issue, how it was impacting politics, how it was impacting elections,” Canary says. She did “a lot of public speaking, driving around, visiting with people,”

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and it became clear that the organization should take a broader look “at things that were related to ‘small d’ democracy issues in this state.”

Canary also became heavily involved in lobbying state government on reform issues and became a reliable “go-to source” for reporters writing about Illinois’ seemingly never-ending ethics problems.

In the ensuing years, Canary and her organization have called out Democrats and Republicans alike on ethics issues. She sometimes has been criticized for being too blunt, and Canary acknowledges her public relations skills could have been better. But, she says, “for the most part, I can’t think of anything much that I have said that I don’t stand behind.”

“I think sometimes, politics is unnecessarily personal and harsh. I think there are a lot of really good people in government, and there are times when I’ve kind of regretted that the rhetoric has ramped up the way it has.”

Despite the accomplishments of the ICPR and other reform groups, much remains to be done, Canary says. “It is really an ongoing process; it’s about being vigilant.”

In the short term, she says, watchdog groups need to look at refinements to the campaign finance law, broadening it to include general election contribution limits for parties and legislative caucuses. Also, “I think there’s a lot to be vigilant about on the transparency front. There are threats to the Freedom of Information Act that we see bubbling in the legislature.” And the next several months will see new maps for legislative and congressional districts, a process that’s always ripe for scrutiny.

“We have been too tolerant of corruption for too long,” Canary says. “We know by looking at the facts, looking at the money, looking at the prosecutions, looking at the sheer number of elected officials who have sadly been indicted and been convicted that we have got a problem in our public sphere.

“There is a fiscal cost in what we pay in our so-called corruption tax.” Along with the dollars that govern-



Cynthia Canary

ment graft siphons away from schools, roads, parks and other needs, “a state that is known for its corruption ... is not necessarily a state where people say, ‘I want to go move my business there.’”

She says she is beginning to sense, though, that “our patience and amusement is beginning to run out with this steady stream of corruption du jour.” In the months following the arrest and impeachment of former Gov. Rod Blagojevich, “we hit that tipping point.”

After she retires on June 1, the 52-year-old Canary plans take some time off and travel to Europe and Iceland. In the fall, she hopes to do some consulting and teaching. “I think I’m going to very much stay in this arena. I’m going to continue doing everything I can for ICPR, and it’s in everybody’s interest that this is a vigorous organization that’s really doing a job as a watchdog and an advocate, sometimes as a cheerleader,” she says.

“An active and engaged public — I know it sounds kind of hokey, it sounds like Pollyanna — but I fundamentally believe they can make a difference.”

Canary says she is working with the ICPR board’s search committee to find her replacement.

Dana Heupel can be reached at heupel.dana@uis.edu.

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Credits: The issue was designed by Patty Sullivan. The photograph on the cover, which comes courtesy of the city of Chicago, was taken by Antonio Dickey at the sky deck of Willis Tower.

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Jamey Dunn



Audit report cites reason to worry about College Illinois investments

by Jamey Dunn

Illinois families who purchased prepaid tuition through the College Illinois program have some reasons to be worried.

In recent audits of the prepaid tuition program and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, state Auditor General William Holland found some serious problems with the way the commission has made investment choices for the savings plan. He said the program, which had a \$338 million deficit as of last June, failed to use "sound business practices" and did not follow the state's procurement law when seeking an outside firm to provide advice.

According to the ISAC audit: "The commission was created to establish and administer a system of financial assistance through student loans and loan guarantees; scholarships and grant awards; and a prepaid tuition program for the residents of the state to enable them to attend qualified public or private institutions of their choice." In addition to College Illinois, ISAC administers the Monetary Award Program, Illinois veterans and National Guard grants, Future Teachers Corps, and scholarship programs for minority teachers and nurse educators, as well as several other scholarship, grant and loan programs.

College Illinois was created by the legislature in 1997 (see related story, page 10.) The next year, Illinois residents could start buying contracts to lock in

34,000 families have purchased contracts with College Illinois, and 55,000 beneficiaries of those contracts are entitled to future tuition benefits.

tuition costs at current levels and avoid future increases at state public universities. The contracts can be used at private and out-of-state schools. According to ISAC, 34,000 families have purchased contracts with College Illinois, and 55,000 beneficiaries of those contracts are entitled to future tuition benefits. The program manages \$1.25 billion and has paid out \$250 million in tuition benefits during the past five years.

The audit of the program says ISAC did not follow the state's procurement requirements when hiring the San Francisco-based investment banking and financial advisement firm Grigsby and Associates to provide advice on where to invest College Illinois funds. The firm provided a price estimate for advisement services without actually providing any qualifications. ISAC was not

clear in the original request that it was seeking help with investment choices, and none of the nine other firms competing for the contract gave a price quote for that type of service. The request focused on bond issuance and debt restructuring, so the other bidders did not include costs for advisement, and ISAC never sought that information from them. The audit says there was "no clear basis" for awarding the contract or ensuring that all who were interested got a chance to bid.

Holland also notes that other companies besides the nine that entered bids may have opted to compete for the job if ISAC had been clear about what it was looking for. "By circumventing the competitive process, the commission may have paid higher fees than it otherwise might have obtained through a truly competitive process."

Grigsby and Associates advised ISAC to invest \$12.78 million of College Illinois funds in a Chicago-based Shorebank investment, even though, according to Holland, the bank showed signs of trouble. College Illinois lost the \$12.78 million when the bank later failed. "Despite the red flags noted, the vendor recommended the investment in the bank, and the Commission purchased the \$12.78 million investment on September 30, 2008. By the end of fiscal year 2010, the Commission determined the entire \$12.78 million value of the investment was worthless when the

Bank was taken over by the FDIC,” the audit of the program says.

In addition to the obvious flaw in that investment — the loss of the \$12.78 million — there were other problems with the manner in which the deal was executed. First, the investment was made before Grigsby and Associates had even signed a contract with ISAC. Holland says once a contract was signed, it was not for the services that Grigsby and Associates provided. ISAC told Holland that problems with the contract occurred because of miscommunications with the investment firm.

A second problem was the way in which the firm was compensated. Grigsby and Associates was only paid if ISAC followed its investment advice, and the only bank up for consideration was Shorebank. Grigsby and Associates made \$255,600, or a 2 percent commission, on the deal. “There was no contractual means for the vendor to be paid under the signed contract if the investment was not made,” the audit says.

In addition to those issues, the *Chicago Sun-Times* reported that the founder of the firm, Calvin Grigsby, had been cited by a California ethics board because of campaign contributions and twice indicted and later acquitted of federal bribery charges.

It is understandable that ISAC made a bad investment decision and even that it lost some money. During the recent recession, many investors lost their shirts, and other state investments, such as pension funds, also took hits. However, ISAC’s pool for advisers and potential investments was severely limited. Looking at only one bank, contracting the vetting of that bank in a sloppy way and paying the advisement firm on commission makes the investment at Shorebank look like a foregone conclusion.

“Best practices require that vendors contracted to provide their opinion on investment purchase decisions do not be compensated on a basis that is contingent upon the opinion rendered,” Holland says. “It would generally be considered to be a prudent business practice for management to consider a variety of alternative private equity investments to allow for greater opportunity to make sound investment choices.”

Unlike other commitments Illinois makes, such as borrowing, the state does

Unlike other commitments Illinois makes, such as borrowing, the state does not guarantee the funds that the 55,000 potential college students are counting on for their future tuition through the College Illinois program.

not guarantee the funds that the 55,000 potential college students are counting on for their future tuition through the College Illinois program. ISAC portrays the program as a safe investment, but some lawmakers say College Illinois’ portfolio has shifted in recent years to riskier ground. According to a legislative resolution that calls for an investigation of College Illinois — which was approved in the House — the fund was primarily invested in stocks and bonds in 2009. By 2011, 38 percent of the program’s investments, or \$419 million, were made in other areas such as hedge funds, real estate and private banks. The program plans to continue to seek those kinds of investments until they represent 47 percent of its portfolio.

“This is not the type of investment that should be used for this type of program,” says Rep. Jim Durkin, sponsor of the House resolution. “It’s the type of investment you use for large endowments that have investment horizons over hundreds of years, not on a contract which is a 15- to 18-year lifespan.” He says that the marketing ISAC has done in the past promised parents a safe investment that would not be affected by “market fluctuation.”

Durkin, who also is a College Illinois contract holder, says, “[The marketing was] very persuasive, and that’s why a lot of people signed up for it.” However, he says, the new, more volatile investments do not back up ISAC’s little-to-no-risk claims. Durkin, a lawyer, says he believes that if the fund were to become insolvent, contract holders would have a legal case against the state, and under a

worst-case scenario, the legislature might have to bail out the fund. He adds, however, that a default is not at all imminent, and ISAC can and should work to overcome its deficit and repair its reputation. “You can still put this back in a good position, on good footing, by going into a more conservative investment policy.”

A parent who wants to pay for a child’s college education has some compelling reasons to lock in today’s tuition rates. The University of Illinois, for instance, increased tuition rates by 6.9 percent this year and 9.5 percent last year. It seems that the best-case budget scenario for public universities is flat state funding for the next fiscal year. When university presidents testified before the legislature earlier this year, they agreed that tuition rates would continue to rise if state funding did not increase. And it is unlikely that universities will see large state funding increases in the coming years, as the state crawls out from under a deep recession and an unprecedented budget crisis.

However, when it comes to their children’s education future, most parents seek as much certainty as possible. Holland’s audits found that College Illinois will remain solvent over the next few years, and its financial outlook will likely improve as the economy recovers. That may not be enough to reassure parents who are disturbed by the audit’s findings and the fund’s riskier investments. To keep the program alive and selling new contracts, people must believe it is a sound investment. A serious drop in confidence could lead to the program’s failure, much like runs on banks contributed to the failure of institutions during the Great Depression. If enough participants decide to pull their investments, then College Illinois could be sunk.

“Public confidence is extremely important for this type of program,” Durkin says. “You need people to invest. You need individuals to sign up and purchase contracts. ... I receive calls from people every day, e-mails from people every day, asking whether they should take their money out. ... Perception is reality. Public confidence is right now in question.”

ISAC has some work to do — on the image and the investment practices of College Illinois. □

BRIEFLY

LEGISLATIVE CHECKLIST

As the deadline for passing bills in both chambers approached, legislators considered proposals dealing with school consolidation, Illinois' method for counting its prison population in the U.S. census, legalizing marijuana for medical use and the growth of its agricultural cousin hemp and other issues. Meanwhile, Gov. Pat Quinn signed into law significant changes to the redistricting process in the state.



Redistricting

SB 3976, PA 1541 Gov. Pat Quinn signed into law legislation that calls for those drawing the new legislative maps to protect the political power of racial and language-minority communities throughout Illinois whenever possible. The law also calls for public hearings on the redistricting process.



FOID cards

HB 3500, SB 27 The names and information of those registered to own firearms in the state would be exempt from public release, except in criminal investigations, under a bill sponsored by Rep. Richard Morthland, a Cordova Republican. It passed in the House. A similar measure in the Senate, **SB 27**, is sponsored by Sen. Kirk Dillard, a Hinsdale Republican.



Hemp

HB 1383 A person wishing to grow, possess, sell or purchase industrial hemp would have been able to get a license to do so for a period of one year, under a measure sponsored by Rep. Ken Dunkin, a Chicago Democrat. The licenses would have been administered by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Applicants would have been required to undergo a statewide and nationwide criminal background check.

The bill failed in the House.



Medical marijuana

HB 30 Under a measure sponsored by Rep. Lou Lang, a Skokie Democrat, any person in the state diagnosed by a physician as having a debilitating medical condition and approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health would be permitted to legally own no more 2.5 ounces of usable cannabis during a 14-day period.



School consolidation

HB 1886, Legislation sponsored by Rep. Robert Rita, a Blue Island Democrat, would dissolve all current school districts and boards of education in the state on July 1, 2012, and create a newly elected board that would take over the new, larger districts within 60 days. This measure came shortly after Gov. Pat Quinn proposed in his budget address to consolidate school districts in an effort to save money from administrative costs.

HB 1216 This bill, sponsored by Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, an Aurora Democrat, would create a commission to advise lawmakers on how and where school districts could consolidate. It passed the House and is pending in the Senate.

SB 1324 A proposal by Sen. Jeffrey Schoenber, an Evanston Democrat, would direct the Illinois State Board of Education to research and report on what areas in the state could save money by consolidating school districts.



Employment

SB 1122 Legislation sponsored by Sen. Terry Link, a Waukegan Democrat, and Rep. Jack Franks, a Woodstock

Democrat, would prohibit employers from discriminating against women on the basis of pregnancy. The bill passed in the Senate and is pending in the House.



Elections

SB 1249 Illinois teenagers would be able to register to vote at the age of 17, under a measure sponsored by Sen. Michael Frerichs, a Champaign Democrat.



Tanning

SB 1329 Tanning facilities in the state would not be able to allow anyone under 18 years old to use their facilities, regardless of parental consent, under a measure sponsored Sen. Jeffrey Schoenber, an Evanston Democrat.



Census

HB 94 Inmates throughout the state would have been counted as residents in their hometowns rather than in areas where the prisons in which they are incarcerated are located, under a bill sponsored by Rep. La Shawn Ford, a Chicago Democrat. The measure would have required that districts, wards and precincts in the state be redistricted according to the adjusted population counts.



Workers' comp

HB 1032 Workers' compensation cases would go back to being fought out in the courts as of next year, under a proposal by Marion Democratic Rep. John Bradley. Previously, Bradley sponsored a workers' compensation reform package that stalled at the end of the last legislative session. His new plan would eliminate the system in Illinois created specifically to handle workers' injury claims.

Murder registry

HB 263 The state would be required to keep a registry of convicted murderers, if the Senate approves this proposal by Elmhurst Republican Rep. Dennis Reboletti. Illinois would keep a public listing of those convicted of first-degree murder and released from prison. Individuals convicted of murder who have been released would be required to register with the state and remain on the list for 10 years after their release. The legislation passed in the House and is sponsored in the Senate by Sen. John Millner, a Carol Stream Republican.

Otter hunting

SB 1337 Hunters would be allowed to kill up to five river otters a year, under a bill sponsored by Democratic Sen. John Sullivan of Rushville. An annual hunting season for river otters would be set by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and otter pelts would have to be registered with the department.

University tuition

SB 114 Public universities would freeze their fees and tuition rates at current levels, under a proposal from Chicago Democratic Sen. Martin Sandoval.

Energy drinks

SB 50 Alcoholic beverages containing caffeine or taurine, often billed as "alcoholic energy drinks," would be banned in the state, under a bill passed by the Senate. Chicago Democratic Sen. Ira Silverstein and Skokie Democratic Rep. Lou Lang are sponsors.

Controlled substance

HB 2089 The chemical "MDVP" would be added to the state's list of controlled substances, under a bill approved by the House. Methylene dioxy pyrovalerone is an ingredient commonly found in bath salts, and state legislatures across the country are considering banning it after national news reports of its being used as an intoxicating drug. The bill is sponsored by Rep. Wayne Rosenthal, a Morrisonville Republican, and Sen. Sam McCann, a Carlinville Republican.

Jaimey Dunn and Lauren Johnson

GOP calls for cuts

After being criticized by Democrats as obstructionists when it came to planning the state's budget, some Republicans have pitched their own plan that they say will save Illinois from future financial crisis.

Senate Republicans say that if Illinois does not work to curb spending, state government could face a \$22 billion deficit by Fiscal Year 2016. To come to that figure, Republicans are assuming Gov. Pat Quinn will propose to spend as much as he can under the spending caps put in place as part of the recent income tax increase. Quinn proposed spending less than the cap in his plan for FY 2012. "Let's be honest. He may say he's spending under the cap this year, but his track record doesn't suggest he spends less than he can," Sen. Matt Murphy, a Republican from Palatine, says of Quinn.

Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno says her party's push to cut about \$5 billion from Quinn's proposed budget for next fiscal year would allow the state to pay down its backlog of late bills without borrowing. She said it would also ensure that the income tax increase is phased out by FY 2016. Republicans say that even though Democrats called for the increase to be temporary, Quinn's spending plan would guarantee that an increased tax rate would have to be extended beyond the five years called for in the legislation.

Republicans released a "menu" of \$6.7 billion in proposed reductions and say they hope to work with Democrats to approve \$4 billion to \$5 billion of them. They say they would be willing to provide at least half the votes needed to pass all the ideas in their plan. "Many worthy programs, programs many of us strongly believe in, that we have advocated for, would be impacted by our plan. The fact is we have no choice. If we do nothing, the problem doesn't disappear. It gets worse," says Sen. Pamela Althoff, a McHenry Republican.

The deepest cuts would come from reductions in the state's Medicaid system and changes to the public employee pension system. Republicans say they



could find \$1.3 billion in savings from Medicaid, which provides health care to low-income residents. They would achieve that through a number of methods, including reducing the rates paid to doctors and changing to eligibility, which would result in fewer people being covered under the program.

The proposed changes to the pension system would limit future benefits for current employees. If such a measure passed, employees would keep all the benefits they earned up to the date of the change but would see reduced benefits after a new law took effect. Republicans estimate that such a change could save Illinois \$1.35 billion.

Senate President John Cullerton says he plans to work with Republicans to find common ground on some of their ideas. "I believe that their proposals and commitment can be the baseline for discussion on what we all agree is a necessary process of cutting waste and creating efficiencies." However, Cullerton believes that changes to retirement benefits for current employees — the largest area of savings in the plan — are not allowed by the state Constitution and recently released a detailed legal analysis to back his stance.

The proposal also calls for economic stimulation through workers' compensation reform and some tax cuts, including eliminating the estate tax. The proposal notes that getting the state on solid financial footing will spur growth. "A balanced budget, prompt payment of state bills and improved business climate will fuel economic activity and result in enhanced state revenues through economic growth," the report says.

Jaimey Dunn

Abolition of death penalty creates cost savings

The elimination of the death penalty and the clearing of death row in Illinois has already resulted in savings reflected in the budget requests of some state agencies and led one advocacy group to rethink its future goals.

State Appellate Defender Michael Pelletier says that Gov. Pat Quinn's signature on the abolition bill and commutation of the sentences of 15 inmates sentenced to death "essentially eliminated the need" for areas of his agency that dealt with capital cases. He says his office would no longer need parts of its Supreme Court Unit, which handled death penalty appeals to the high court. The agency also plans to eliminate the Capital Post Conviction Unit, which assisted those sentenced to death with the appeals process, and the Capital Trial Assistance Unit, which helped the defense in cases where the prosecution was seeking the death penalty.

Pelletier says the elimination of death penalty cases would result in a savings of about \$4.7 million from his office. The agency is requesting \$21 million instead of its initial request of about \$26.6 million. The office is asking for money to go toward a juvenile resource center that has not been funded in recent years and a student program that would allow interested young people to be exposed to the work of public defenders that has not been funded for the past four years. Pelletier says the appellate defender's office would still need some money to assist on appeals for former death row inmates. "Ethically [those defense attorneys] have an obligation to continue to represent those clients at the [post-conviction level] ... and eventually, the appeals." However he says the agency is starting the process of "winding down and closing [those] offices."

The office closings and budget reduction would also mean layoffs. Pelletier says 37 employees would "not be with the agency next fiscal year." However, he adds that new dollars for a Juvenile Resource Center would mean the creation of four new positions.

Patrick Delfino, director of the Illinois state's attorneys appellate prosecutor's office, says the elimination of capital cases will mean a reduction of about 23 percent in costs to his office that are covered by the general revenue fund. The office received slightly more than \$9 million in general revenue for the current fiscal year.

The Illinois Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty will be reducing its size and re-evaluating its mission. However, Executive Director Jeremy Schroeder says the group will continue to exist, and death penalty issues will remain its focus. "We always have to be vigilant about preventing the death penalty from coming back in Illinois, so there will always be an organization." Shortly after Quinn signed the abolition bill, lawmakers introduced legislation to reinstate the death penalty.

Schroeder says the fact that the abolition will save the state money helped the group when lobbying the legislature. He says the savings helped advocates get "a foot in the door" with lawmakers who had not previously supported the ban. But in the end, he says it was the history of serious flaws in the system that persuaded lawmakers to support the change. "It was the cost savings plus having such a broken system that we haven't used for 11 years."

Jamey Dunn

Report: College Illinois underfunded

A *Crain's Chicago Business* investigation into College Illinois' Prepaid Tuition Program has caused concern among investors and has prompted an Illinois lawmaker to call for a state probe.

According to *Crain's*, the program is underfunded by 31 percent and has the deepest shortfall of 12 states with similar prepaid tuition plans.

College Illinois' Prepaid Tuition Program allows individuals to lock in current tuition rates at Illinois' public universities for their children to attend college in the future.

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), which is responsible for overseeing the program, has overhauled the program's portfolio by moving assets from traditional investments, such as stocks and bonds, to alternative, riskier investments, such as hedge funds, real

estate and private equity, according to the report.

As of January, 38 percent of the fund's assets were in alternative investments. ISAC plans to increase alternative investments to 47 percent. The annual rate of return for the fund is estimated at 8.75 percent, says John Samuels, chief communications officer at ISAC.

ISAC's investment strategy was influenced by the market collapse of 2008-2009 and the rising cost of tuition, he says. The program's funded liability dropped from 93 percent to 67 percent during that period. Less than 2 percent of assets were in alternative investments in 2008. Alternative investments give a higher long-term return with no appreciable increase in risk, Samuels says.

Rep. Jim Durkin, a Western Springs Republican, says the strategy is a problem. He has introduced a resolution in the

General Assembly that orders an investigation of ISAC's investment decisions. Illinois is under no obligation to bail out the program if the fund runs dry.

"I think a lot of people were under the impression that this was a contract that was going to be backed up by the full faith and credit of the state of Illinois," Durkin says.

There are a lot of parents wondering if they should withdraw from the plan and take their losses now instead of later, Durkin says.

The fund can cover liabilities until at least 2023 under current conditions, says Samuels. Assuming a reasonable return, along with the sale of more contracts and tuition going up less than 9 percent annually, ISAC does not anticipate any problems with paying out benefits, he says.

Durkin doesn't want investors to leave the fund, nor is he in favor of closing the



Members of the Illinois Senate Redistricting Committee listen to testimony in Springfield. The committee held hearings throughout the state to get input from citizens and interest groups as lawmakers worked to draw a new map of legislative districts based on updated population statistics. States are required to redraw their legislative maps once every 10 years after new U.S. census numbers are released.

program to new investors. He says he wants to set the program on the right course. College Illinois should honor the 55,000 contracts and make wise investments to ensure funds are available, he says.

“You wonder why of all the investments the state of Illinois has, the one that deals with guaranteeing parents that their child will have an education paid for at a later point, that they choose to roll the dice and take a risky approach,” Durkin says.

Samuels says, “Somehow the notion that we are doing something radical or riskier, we think is really misguided.

“Unfortunately, the term ‘alternative investment’ is radioactive. Just saying the term alternative investment, people think that they are not secure or have greater risk.”

Durkin purchased a four-year contract for his daughter and is worried that ISAC’s long-term return rate of 8.75 percent is untenable. ISAC’s plan is modeled on university endowment plans, including those of Harvard University and Yale University, according to Samuels.

“We are not going to do as well as the endowment funds at 14 or 16 percent, so 8.75 percent to us seems like a very attainable and realistic target,” he says.

The current rate of return is more than five percentage points higher than what ISAC has projected going forward.

“Since the start of the fiscal year, July 1, 2010, the fund has had an annualized return of 14.1 percent, exceeding our goals, which are in the 9 percent range, so we are doing well,” Samuels says.

“I think that the principles and goals of when College Illinois was started were on strong grounds, but you can’t run a fund which is 50 percent invested in high risk alternative investments. That’s not what I signed up for, nor the other contract holders,” Durkin says.

A similar resolution introduced last fall by Rep. Robert Pritchard, a Hinckley Republican, died in the House Rules Committee. Durkin says that the issue has now caught the attention of other lawmakers because of the high stakes.

“The ultimate outcome that I want to see is a more conservative investment strategy that is going to bring this fund back up to a palatable level. One that is going to at least give confidence to people who are in the system that they are going to be able to receive their return on their investment,” Durkin says.

Kendall Cramer

Regional school chiefs cry foul over proposal to cut offices

If legislators follow through on Gov. Pat Quinn's plan to eliminate funding for Regional Offices of Education, it is unclear who would take on the services they provide, which are required by law.

Quinn estimates cutting funding to the offices would save about \$13 million. However, superintendents say eliminating their operations would not justify the savings. They say they have been responsible with state money, operating on a flat budget for more than five years. "That [\$13 million] may not sound like a whole lot of money, and frankly it isn't. But for everything that we do, it's a ton of money. This is [a] cut that really doesn't add up," says Gil Morrison, president of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools and a regional superintendent in DeKalb County.

Regional Offices of Education offer mandated services, such as teacher certification, building inspections, employee background checks and other support services to schools and districts. They also provide professional development opportunities, such as workshops that teachers are required to take to keep their certification, and mentoring programs for new teachers and principals. Regional superintendents administer alternative schools for children facing challenges in the traditional system or who may have been expelled. They also conduct testing for the General Education Development degree, available to students who do not complete high school. "We keep our schools safe, which is one of the most important concerns to families in the state of Illinois," says Robert Daiber, regional superintendent for Madison County.

State Superintendent Christopher Koch says eliminating the offices would be a blow to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). "There's all kinds of work they do with certification. They run schools, alternative schools and truancy alternative schools. They do all sorts of compliance reviews for us at the state board. So it would be a significant loss for



us, as well," he told RFD radio after Quinn's budget address. ISBE's budget proposal for fiscal year 2012 recommended a \$2 million increase for the regional offices.

Ralph Grimm,

superintendent of West Central School District in Biggsville, says local districts are too overwhelmed by losing staff because of budget cuts, coping with late payments from the state and trying to fulfill requirements to take on the duties regional administrators handle. "Who will do the work of the regional superintendents and their staff on behalf of our children if these offices are eliminated?" Grimm asked. "I haven't heard yet who's going to step up and take care of those responsibilities."

Before Quinn pitched his budget proposal, members of his staff laid out two possible alternatives for the regional offices. They said that ISBE might take up some of their functions, or local districts would have to pick up the slack.

Kay Pangle, regional superintendent for the Iroquois Kankakee Regional Office of Education, says that many of the things that Regional Offices of Education handle for local districts and schools are required by laws approved by the General Assembly, so it would be unfair to pass those costs on to local governments. "It seems only prudent that the state would be the one to bear the cost of providing those services. No one at the local level should have to provide that money to provide those services [required] by the state legislature," she says.

Kelly Kraft, spokeswoman for Quinn's budget office, says it is possible that local governments would have to foot the bill for the regional offices if they find them valuable. "If local districts still want to have the regional superintendents, then local districts would need to take up that funding," she says. That would mean the districts would pay for requirements such as background checks on employees that are mandated by the legislature.

James Dunn



Obama, Koch want change in No Child Left Behind act

Illinois State Superintendent Christopher Koch says he backs President Barack Obama's call for a congressional fix to No Child Left Behind.

Obama urged overhaul and reauthorization of the sweeping education law before the start of the next school year. His goal, he said, is to make sure the nation's students are prepared to go to college and into careers.

Koch says: "I think it's a good goal to have all kids college- and career-ready, and now collectively define what that means for the states. I fully support the prompt reauthorization of the act."

The U.S. Department of Education recently concluded that this year, more than 80 percent of the nation's 100,000 public schools are expected to be unable

Study says Illinois leads juvenile justice reform measures

A new national study lists Illinois as a leader in juvenile justice reform because of changes in state law intended to reduce the number of youths prosecuted in the state's adult criminal justice system.

According to a report from the Campaign for Youth Justice, a Washington-D.C.-based group for juvenile justice reform, after a rise in youth crime rates in the 1980s and 1990s, states began making policy changes that shifted more youth offenders to the adult justice and correctional system. The study cites the National Institute of Corrections, which found that about 250,000 youth are prosecuted in the adult criminal justice system annually.

However, the group's new national report, *State Trends: Legislative Changes from 2005-2010 Removing Youth from the Adult Criminal Justice System*, found that, over the span of the study, 15 states have made legislative changes that result in fewer young people going into the adult system. "State policymakers appear less wedded to 'tough on crime' policies, choosing to substitute them with policies that are 'smart on crime,'" Liz Ryan, chief executive officer of the Campaign for Youth Justice, wrote in the report. "Our

legal system recognizes a mandate to rehabilitate youth with an approach that is different than adults, but we have never fully lived up to it."

The study identifies four trends in changes to state policy: passing laws that limit the housing of youth in adult jails or prisons; expanding the jurisdiction of juvenile courts so some older youth can still be tried as juveniles; changing laws that determine if cases are transferred to the adult system; and changing mandatory minimum sentencing laws. Illinois was recognized in the report for changes to the jurisdiction of the state's juvenile justice system, as well as to the process for shifting youth cases to the adult system.

In 2005, Illinois rolled back a requirement that automatically transferred some youth drug crimes into the adult system. According to the report, in the first year after the change, the number of youth transferred to the adult system in Cook County dropped by two-thirds. "The kids in the adult court were first-time offenders, and they got, at the most, probation," says Betsy Clarke, president of the Juvenile Justice Initiative. She says in many cases, the youth who were funneled into

the adult system actually faced less punishment, but they emerged with the stain of a criminal record. "They had this adult arrest permanently on their record. ... It was really branding the kids at a very young age for behavior that is pretty widespread."

Since 2010, 17-year-olds accused of misdemeanors in Illinois fall under the jurisdiction of the juvenile system. Before the law was changed in 2009, all 17-year-olds were automatically pushed into the adult system. "These were just failed policies. Well-intentioned at the time and meant to clean up the streets ... but failed policies as we learned more about what worked," says Clarke. Since the changes, there has not been a significant spike in juvenile crime. "There just doesn't seem to be a fiscal impact or an impact on crime from moving kids back into the juvenile system."

Clarke says that in recent years, Illinois has produced important research on such topics as the development of adolescent brains and taken such innovative steps as addressing trauma among children in the juvenile justice system. "It's really been a remarkable period in Illinois."

Jamey Dunn

to meet standards established by No Child Left Behind in 2002.

Obama says he wants an accountability system "more accurately focused on student learning and growth." The federal education department has given 44 states \$350 million to design new testing systems that are expected to set the course for a national set of standards. The aim, according to background information from the White House, is to replace "narrow, fill-in-the-bubble tests with a new generation of college- and career-ready tests."

Obama said: "In the 21st century, it's not enough to leave no child behind. We need to help every child get ahead. We need to get every child on a path to academic excellence."

"So what this means, though, is that we need a better way of figuring out which schools are deeply in trouble, which schools aren't, and how we get not only the schools that are in really bad shape on track, how do we help provide the tools to

schools that want to get even better to get better."

Koch says he expects that if the law is reauthorized, the emphasis on proficiency in it will be replaced by measuring student growth. "So it becomes less punitive, and now that we're using student performance in even more important decisions like teacher evaluation, you know that has high stakes attached to it."

Obama said: "That way of measuring success and failure, that's the first problem with No Child Left Behind that we need to fix. Instead of labeling schools a failure one day and then throwing up our hands and walking away from them, we need to refocus on the schools that need the most help. We need to hold our schools accountable for the success of every child -- black, white, Latino, Asian, students with disabilities, English language learners."

Koch says it is important for federal law to address the needs of what he calls "subgroups," such as students with dis-

abilities or those for whom English is a second language. "The law could allow a longer period of time to acquire English." Reauthorization, he says, "might introduce the option for multiple measures, to take us away from just a myopic focus on two or three academic areas to other measures of proficiency."

Koch says he would have liked to have seen additional issues addressed in Obama's speech announcing the proposals. "I like very much that he is raising the expectation of all kids being college- and career-ready. He's building off of the national collective effort by states toward common standards. I think all of that's appropriate. ... I guess if there's one thing that he could have talked a little about, or certainly the secretary of education could, it is more alignment between the federal education laws. ... I'm concerned about workforce preparation in the state, making sure we're raising standards for our students, making sure that all teachers have mastered content."

Maureen Foertsch McKinney



Study cites deficient bridges

A report by the advocacy group Transportation for America indicates that more than 2,200, or 8.5 percent, of bridges in Illinois are structurally deficient. The report calls on Congress to provide additional resources for states to repair and rebuild highway bridges.

The report says that under federal guidelines, bridges are classified as structurally deficient if "engineers have identified a major defect in its support structure or its deck."

Illinois ranks 35th (with 51 being the best) for having the worst bridges in the country, according to the report. Structurally deficient bridges require "significant maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement," the report states.

The average age of Illinois' bridges is 38 years, compared with 42 nationally. Nearly 7,000 of 26,000 bridges in Illinois are more than 50 years old, the expected lifespan of most bridges.

"Bridges maintained by IDOT [Illinois Department of Transportation] and the state are open to the public and are safe for the motoring public. The state follows a rigorous inspection schedule for all of its bridges, and we continue to share the results of those inspections with the public through our website," says Josh Kauffman, communication manager for the department says. Bridge inspections follow federal guidelines.

Ownership of Illinois' highway bridges is divided among the state and local counties, cities and towns, as well as other entities, including private businesses and federal agencies, according to the report. Ownership determines which jurisdiction is responsible for bridge upkeep.

"Of the 10 states with the largest bridge inventory, Illinois ranks first with the lowest percentage of bridges classified as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. So, still compared to other states, Illinois bridges are in excellent shape.

"IDOT is always committed to the safety of the motoring public and has proactively awarded \$1.3 billion to repair or replace 547 bridges in the past three fiscal years," Kauffman says.

Eleven percent of the nation's highway bridges are structurally deficient. In 2009, the Federal Highway Administration estimated that it would cost about \$71 billion to address the backlog of deficient bridges, the report states.

Despite increasing needs, federal funds remain insufficient. In 2009, Congress appropriated \$5.2 billion of the needed \$70.9 to repair deteriorating bridges. From 2006 through 2009, appropriations increased by \$650 million, but needs increased by about \$23 billion, according to the report.

"As bridges continue to age and fall into disrepair, our nation's policymakers must make a greater commitment to maintaining and repairing these crucial assets.

"An increasing number of American individuals and businesses rely on bridges that are subject to closure or weight restriction if increased maintenance and reconstruction are not undertaken — a potentially crippling impact on personal travel and freight movement," the report states.

Transportation for America says that over a 25-year period, the cost of deferring repairs on highways and bridges can be triple that of preventative repairs. Deferral can increase safety risks, hinder economic prosperity and burden taxpayers, the report states.

The most heavily used deficient bridges are in Cook and DuPage counties. Overall, Wabash County has the most structurally deficient bridges (21.7 percent) and Kendall County has the least, with less than 1 percent.

Kendall Cramer

Southern Illinoisans voice disapproval of government

Residents of the southern region of the state are growing increasingly dissatisfied with some elected officials. And while they continue to oppose increases to the state income tax, they support another proposed tax increase that has hit roadblocks in recent years.

According to a recent poll of 400 registered voters in the state's 18 southern-most counties, southern Illinois residents view the state and federal government in a negative light, but they view their local governments as helpful. More than half of respondents said the effect of state and federal government on their daily lives is "mostly harmful." Only 31 percent had the same opinion of local government and 54 percent viewed it as "beneficial."

Fifty-four percent of southern Illinoisans say they either "disapprove" or "strongly disapprove" of Gov. Pat Quinn's governing choices. Quinn won the popular vote in last November's general election in only two of the counties surveyed, Jackson and Alexander.

Only 22 percent approved of the performance of the Illinois House. The Illinois Senate has a 24 percent approval rating. The poll conducted by the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.8 percentage points.

This negative perception of government has grown in recent decades. In a 1977 poll conducted by political science professors, 42 percent rated the House as favorable, with only 7 percent of respondents giving the chamber an unfavorable rating. Results for the Senate in the 1977 poll were comparable to those of the House.

In the 1977 poll, then-Gov. Jim Thompson received a 39 percent approval rating, with more than half of respondents saying they were still undecided about the newly elected governor. Only 10 percent of those queried gave Thompson a negative rating. "Many voters weren't certain about Thompson, who was just a newly elected governor then. They are certain they don't like Quinn today," the institute's analysis of the poll said.

John Jackson, a political scientist at SIU who worked on both the recent and 1977 polls, says the growing distrust of

government is indicative of a shift in attitudes that has occurred nationwide. "In my view, we live in a political culture that denigrates and decries the role of government daily."

Meanwhile, 60 percent surveyed did support a \$1-dollar-a-pack cigarette tax increase. The Senate approved such an increase during the previous legislative session, but supporters failed to rally enough votes in the House.

The majority of respondents opposed other possible forms of tax increases, and 64 percent disagreed with the recently enacted income tax increase. More than 60 percent were also opposed to expanding gaming to grow state tax revenues. Almost 60 percent of those questioned said the state's budget deficit could be solved by cutting waste and government inefficiency.

Jackson points out that many popular cuts, such as eliminating legislative sup-

port staff, would do little to balance the budget. He says many residents are misinformed about both the state and federal budgets. "People believe all kinds of total mythology about what the budgets on the federal and state level are all about."

Counties included in the 2011 Southern Illinois Poll are: Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Union, Washington, White and Williamson.

Jamey Dunn

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Group fights to save historic structures

The Park Ridge home and studio of Italian sculptor Alfonso Iannelli and his wife, Margaret, is up for sale and could be subject to demolition because of redevelopment at the site, according to Judy Barkley, who nominated the site for the preservation advocacy group Landmarks Illinois' statewide annual "Ten Most Endangered Historic Places" in early April.

Iannelli more than 40 years ago produced sculptures with fellow architects Frank Lloyd Wright, Barry Byrne and Purcell and Elmslie at his home.

Illinois' most historic bridges, community centers and churches are in danger of demolition because of new construction and a poor economic climate, according to Landmarks Illinois. All 10 sites listed are in dire need of local support and assistance from the state, says Jim Peters, president of the organization.

Barkley, chair of the Park Ridge Historic Preservation Commission, says her efforts to save the site have been restricted by the city. She sits on the board of the Kalo Foundation, a local advocacy group that proposes to turn the property into the Iannelli Studio Heritage Center.

"Having this on the endangered list will help us raise even more awareness," says Barkley, noting that although the group lacks city sponsorship, its efforts to preserve the homes raised \$100,000. The group has handed out more than 15,000 flyers and plans to continue raising money and mounting efforts to prevent developers from tearing down the property.

"All of these buildings and structures have tremendous community support, and they are all threatened in one way or another," says Peters. Since its inception, the group has listed more than 180 sites to publicize the level of threat and the importance of the buildings and to prevent destruction by city councils and developers.

Another site on the list is a 1909 settlement house in the West End neighborhood of Rock Island, which once provided child care, cooking lessons and nutrition programs for needy families at a time when such services were scarce.

Other sites on the endangered list include the state's oldest bridge, Bolivia Road Bridge, which separates Christian and Sangamon counties; the 1859 Soper-Burr mansion in Bloomington; a group of three Streator Catholic churches; the state's oldest and newly foreclosed movie palace, New Regal Theater in Chicago; the Will Rogers Theatre in Charleston; the German-owned Belleville Turner Hall in Belleville; an 1871 last-of-its-kind sheriff's residence and jail in Paxton; and — on the list for a third year — the 35-year-old former Prentice Women's Hospital in Chicago. Northwestern University announced its intention in early April to demolish the hospital this fall.

Lauren N. Johnson

Photographs courtesy of Landmarks Illinois



Will Rogers Theatre in Charleston



A settlement house in the West End neighborhood of Rock Island



The Alfonso Iannelli home and studio in Park Ridge

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Thomas Jefferson



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The city under Daley

The end of the mayor's tenure comes amid increasing signs that much of the official story line might not stand up to scrutiny

by Dan Mihalopoulos

He saved the city from ending up like Detroit.

He runs City Hall as if he were the CEO of a private corporation.

He is the "greenest" mayor in the country.

He turned around what were the worst schools in the nation.

He is not a machine boss like his father.

He is the greatest mayor the city has ever had.

He is the best mayor in America.

All of those statements, and other similarly sweeping pronouncements, form the narrative that Chicago's longest-serving mayor and his allies cultivated carefully during his 22 years in office. His admirers in the city and far beyond its limits are certain to repeat all those plaudits in some form as Daley turns over his gavel on May 16 to Rahm Emanuel.

But the end of Mayor Richard II's virtually undisputed tenure comes amid increasing signs that so much of the official hagiography might not stand up to being scrootened (to borrow a word he invented in the heat of a news conference). How many of the hallelujahs will history confirm? And how many will seem like little more than the fawning praise of contemporaries who gained from lauding him — or who could have lost everything if they had questioned the decisions of a mayor with little patience for those who challenged his authority?

Recently returned from a two-year stint as a senior White House aide, longtime Daley adviser David Axelrod made the

case for the retiring mayor "as one of the great mayors in the history, not just of this city but the country."

"You can see evidence of Daley's genius and his vision all over the city, but perhaps the greatest achievement that he should feel really good about and we should celebrate is what he did to put the city back together in 1989," Axelrod said on April 7 at an event organized by the City Club of Chicago and the Chicago News Cooperative. "Rich Daley is a unique character. Obviously, he eats and lives and breathes Chicago, and he came to the office that way. He never had any other aspirations, looking to be governor or senator or anything else, and he had this innate understanding. ... He grew up with this stuff, and he understood this city at a very, very kind of granular level. He understood every block of this city, he understood the neighborhoods, and he has and had a genius for cities, generally."

On Michigan Avenue, a couple of blocks from the Daley-built Millennium Park, Pakistani immigrant Arshad "Sony" Javid says Chicago had become a magnet for the tourists who account for most of the clientele at his Café Descartes, one of nine upscale coffee shops that Javid owns. "Nobody can compare to Mayor Daley," he says.

Downtown may be gleaming like never before, but the story of Daley's Chicago beyond the core "is not a good situation, not at all," says Thomas Balanoff, president of the Service Employees International Union's State Council. The labor group

invested millions of dollars in recent elections for City Council candidates who would be less willing to bend to Daley's will. "I think the mayor's legacy is mixed, obviously," Balanoff says. "If you just view the city from North Avenue to Roosevelt Road to Ashland, you say, 'Wow, it's a beautiful city.' That will obviously be part of his legacy."

"On the other hand, they took over the schools 15 years ago — certainly, the Chicago Public Schools are in worse shape than they were. The reality is, as you get outside of the downtown here and get into the neighborhoods ... the statistics are not very good. Half the families are at or below a sustainable wage. ... It leaves our city as a tale of two cities, really. In the end, Mayor Daley has to carry a lot of that responsibility."

Even in the best of times under Daley the Younger, some observers of Chicago politics espoused an alternative plot line: The booming economy had made the mayor's judgment seem wiser than it actually was.

While city revenues flowed at record high levels, Daley built scores of libraries, fire houses, police stations and schools all across the city. City Council members rarely second-guessed him, much less voted against his agenda, as each received a pot of "aldermanic menu" funding worth more than \$1 million a year for new sidewalks, street lights, "blue light" police cameras, repaved alleys and other infrastructure improvements in their wards. In anticipation of a Chicago Olympics in 2016, unionized city workers received

long-term contracts that promised pay raises and good benefits for a decade.

After the recession hit, however, the city was left in the same dismal state as so many other cities across the country. With the Daley administration's spending outstripping its resources by hundreds of millions of dollars every year, it became obvious that hewing to the narrative cost much more than the city could afford.

Daley shirked blame, and it seemed no potentially strong challenger could emerge who would threaten to unseat him. Still, Daley surprisingly passed on the chance to seek a seventh term and publicly professed neutrality in the succession battle. The candidates to replace him declined to criticize him directly, but the tenor of the campaign for the open mayor's office made clear they under-

stood how few voters were happy with the state of the city.

Emanuel, who worked on Daley's first successful run for mayor in 1989, promised that he would radically reconfigure government as Chicago has known it for decades. In his election-night victory speech in February, Emanuel thanked Daley for his service. Yet, Emanuel said the next day, "The status quo, across the waterfront of issues, is unacceptable."

The status quo and Daley's record are inseparable, given that Daley has served longer than any Chicago mayor and because he had near-total power. In crucial areas, from city finances to environmental policy, the facts suggest a vast discrepancy between Daley's authorized biography and the reality on the ground on the eve of the historic turnover of City Hall power.

CITY FINANCES

Daley insisted that at least his city was not as bad off as the state and federal governments or other big cities. In truth, the seeds of Chicago's fiscal problems were sown while the economy was still hot, and the city's outlook is grimmer than that of New York or Los Angeles, according to bond rating agencies. Wall Street analysts, who recently downgraded the city's credit rating and gave Chicago a negative financial outlook, have noted that Daley began drawing on the city's reserves as early as 2006, before the recession began.

The administration relied heavily on economically sensitive revenue streams, especially the real estate sales tax, which rose and fell with the general health of the economy. While the going was good, Chicago did not save (unlike New York, which generated surpluses and banked them during the boom years). Instead, the Daley administration spent like so many American families, as if the good times would roll forever. Year after year, the Daley administration burned up almost all that it reaped from the record-high revenue stream. Rather than rein in costs, city officials put aside tiny surpluses, much smaller than what government finance experts recommend.



Although revenues plummeted in recent years, the costs of city government continued to grow. Even after the recession hit, the city's budget continued to increase, to a total of more than \$6 billion a year. Factoring in underfunded city employee pensions, the city's real annual deficit exceeds \$1 billion.

"You simply cannot maintain Mayor Daley's vision with the current sources of revenue," former mayoral budget director Bill Abolt told the Chicago News Cooperative. "The money is not there for the services and the capital projects that the mayor was delivering. It just doesn't add up."

Perhaps nothing damaged Daley's approval rating as much as the 2008 privatization of the city's parking meter system. Emanuel now faces the same budget woes, or worse, and he will not have almost all of the \$1.2 billion in proceeds from the 75-year meter deal because Daley and the council spent most of the windfall within a couple of years to balance budgets.

Emanuel's options are further restricted by Daley's 2007 agreement with labor unions representing thousands of city workers. Motivated by his unsuccessful quest to land the 2016 Summer Olympics, Daley entered into a 10-year deal that the city could not fully abide by for very long. To avoid threatened layoffs, unions have agreed to forgo wage increases and take furlough days that amount to a pay cut of 9.3 percent. The concessions agreement with labor that Daley forged expires at the end of June, just a few weeks after Emanuel takes office.

EDUCATION

The over-arching fiscal crisis also threatens whatever gains the mayor can claim in public education in Chicago. Apart from the city's deficit, Chicago Public Schools faces a shortfall that officials pegged at \$720 million this year in a budget of \$6.4 billion.

Daley often has said his proudest accomplishment in public life was taking over control of the school system. But the success of Daley's school reform efforts is debatable.

To be sure, some of the magnet high schools created under Daley's watch rank among the best in the Illinois. At the same time, dropout rates remain very high.



Mayor Richard Daley greets Chinese President Hu Jintao at O'Hare International Airport.

Almost half of students never finish high school. And a 2006 study found that only 6.5 percent eventually graduated from a four-year college.

The specter of lengthy teachers' union strikes vanished under Daley, but that does not mean that the power of organized labor in the public schools does not still frustrate the mayor. Emanuel, like Daley before him, is pledging to extend the school day, which is the shortest of any major city in the country because of union rules.

Emanuel also appears to share Daley's affection for charter schools, which expanded dramatically under Daley.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Chicago has more rooftop gardens, or green roofs, than any other city in the country. Yet, on perhaps the single most important environmental issue that the city can directly control — recycling by the city's homes and businesses — Daley took a different tack than almost all of the rest of the nation and failed dramatically.

Under Daley's unique Blue Bag residential recycling program, the city

claimed that about one-third of residents put recyclables in blue bags that were tossed into garbage bins with other waste, diverting more than 25 percent of refuse from landfills. A *Chicago Tribune* investigation in 2005 found that those claims were vastly exaggerated. The city's own participation study showed that only 13 percent of households were recycling with blue bags. And the true recycling rate was only about 8 percent.

After staunchly defending the Blue Bag initiative for years, Daley finally promised to switch the entire city to the curbside blue carts used virtually everywhere beyond the city limits. The expansion of the program soon was suspended, citing budget woes. In vast swaths of the city, residents served by Streets and Sanitation have no option but to haul paper, plastic, cans and other recyclables to what were supposed to be temporary bins set up in parks.

In the final months of his tenure, Daley sought bids from private companies that finally would provide recycling to homes across Chicago.

CORRUPTION

Nothing inspires derision from Daley as much as suggestions that he is the boss of a political machine, as his father was.

The mirage of merit trumping clout dissolved in a 2005 midnight raid of Daley's office by federal agents. The feds unearthed computerized lists with the names of thousands of city job seekers and their political sponsors. They showed that who you knew did indeed continue to matter at City Hall, at least in trying to land the most lucrative blue-collar city jobs.

Daley had indeed largely dismantled the Cook County Democratic machine of his father's day, in that most patronage no longer was dispensed through Democratic ward organizations. Daley's aides instead created a new machine. While a handful of ward organizations still could promise jobs and promotions to loyal campaign workers, it quickly became clear to the city's political foot soldiers that the best way to get ahead in the Daley administration was to work for new organizations that took election-season orders from the mayor's top aides. Those new groups, including the Hispanic Democratic Organization, were organized along racial

lines rather than ward boundaries, and they were deployed to the city's precincts to reward Daley's political allies and punish critics.

Federal authorities won the conviction of the mayor's patronage chief, Robert Sorich, and openly suggested that other, higher-ranking officials would be prosecuted. That never came to pass because none of the Daley aides who were convicted in the "massive fraud" in hiring cooperated with investigators, choosing to go to prison rather than help authorities build cases against bigger fish.

A NEW KIND OF TOWN

Daley allies who acknowledge the administration's shortcomings argue that the mayor nevertheless deserves praise for his role in ostensibly preventing Chicago from withering like so many other Rust Belt cities. Many in the city and beyond hold up Daley as an example of what a mayor should be because Chicago has attracted more than its share of what urban experts call "the creative class," believed to be critical to reinvigorating cities.

The influx of young professionals, as well as deep-pocketed empty-nesters,

could not match the continued departures of middle-class Chicagoans. During the 1990s, Chicago's population grew for the first time in five decades, by 4 percent. But the 2010 U.S. census data show that the gains of the 1990s were erased in the last decade, when the overall population fell by more than 200,000, or almost 7 percent. That made Chicago the only one of the country's 10 largest cities that contracted between 2000 and 2010.

While white residents flooded into affluent, condo-boom neighborhoods in and near the Loop, Chicago's black population dropped sharply, and growth in the Hispanic population slowed dramatically. Sixty of 77 neighborhoods registered a loss of population in the latest census.

Those numbers suggest that the retiring mayor helped mold a new sort of American city, although Daley's kind of Chicago was not necessarily a better version, able to provide the public safety and educational opportunities that would retain the middle class and at last offset the decades-long flight of residents to the suburbs. □

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Photograph by Antonio Dickey, courtesy of the city of Chicago

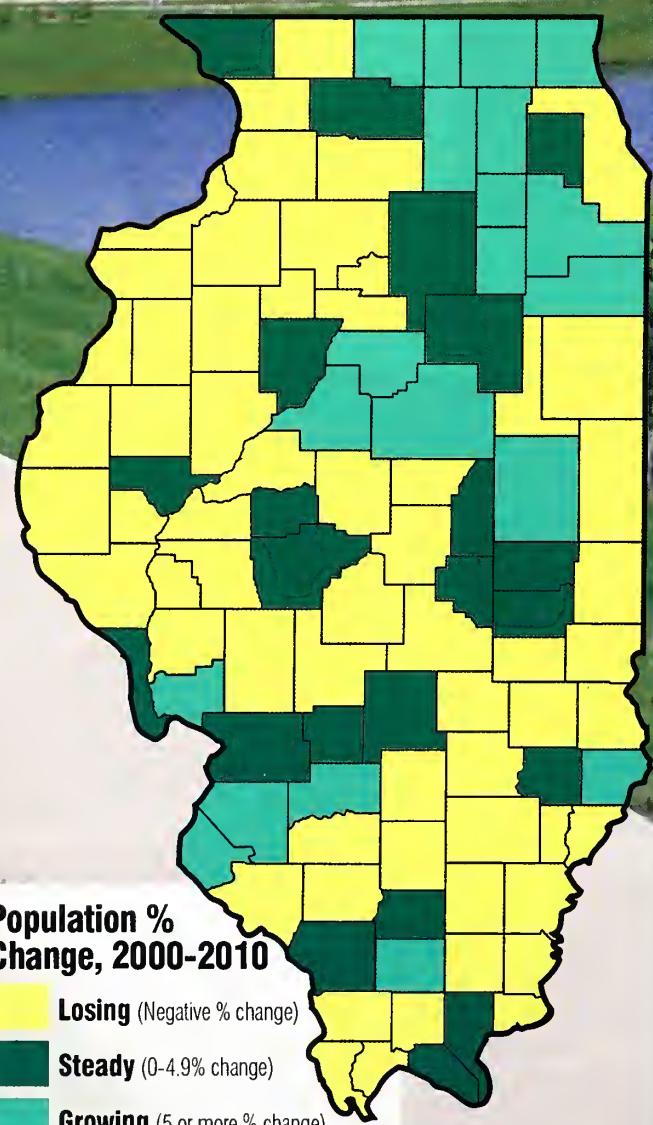


Daley discusses the city's \$6.15 million budget for Fiscal Year 2011.

Spreading out

Illinois' fastest growing areas are the 'ring around the collar,' the suburbs beyond those immediately surrounding Cook County

by Daniel C. Vock



Twenty years ago, almost no one would have thought to call the Fox River village of Oswego a "suburb." Located 50 miles from Chicago's Loop, Oswego was incorporated before the Civil War. By 1990, it still had fewer than 4,000 residents. But Oswego's fortunes changed dramatically in the two decades that followed.

Cheap land and easy commutes attracted newcomers, chiefly from other suburbs. By the time the new millennium arrived, the village population had climbed to more than 13,000. The building boom only accelerated in the last decade. According to U.S. census data released earlier this year, Oswego now has more than 30,000 residents — a nearly eight-fold increase since 1990.

All around Oswego, too, the population is growing. The opportunities for brand-new development in Cook County and even west suburban DuPage County are fewer and farther between. Some of the biggest growth in Illinois is no longer in the traditional "collar counties" that border Cook County. Instead, the fastest growing areas now are in the "ring around the collar." Kendall County, which includes Oswego, is the fastest-growing of them all, not just in Illinois but also in the entire United States. Since 2000, it more than doubled in population.

The population details — laid out in this year's once-in-a-decade release of U.S. census numbers — show how Illinoisans are changing as a people. As the moving vans are dropping people off in Illinois' suburbs, they are loading up families moving out of Chicago and rural areas downstate. We are becoming not only more suburban, but more diverse. Hispanic Illinoisans outnumber blacks for the first time; if not for the surge in Hispanic population, Illinois would hardly be growing at all.

The decennial snapshot from the census is perhaps the best portrait we have of the state as a whole. It illustrates how we are changing and what challenges we are soon likely to face. The growth of the outer suburbs puts stress on local infrastructure, such as roads, sewer pipes and school buildings, and affects regional and state resources, too. Likewise, the movement of African-Americans out of Chicago, the emptying of rural areas and the growth of Latinos in nearly every corner of the state will have lasting effects on Illinois politics and policy.

Most of the national trends highlighted by the new batch of census data are not new, especially the concentration of Americans in metropolitan areas, the surge of the suburbs and the growth of the Latino population.

The size of the flight of black families from Chicago, though, took almost everyone by surprise. Of the 30 cities with the largest African-American populations, 19 saw decreases in the number of blacks, says William Frey, a demographer with the Brookings

Census data crunching shows growth favors Republicans

Perhaps the most immediate consequence of the new census numbers comes with this year's task of drawing new legislative and congressional districts for the next decade. Democrats control the process this year, because they're in charge of both chambers of the General Assembly and hold the governor's office.

But overall, the census numbers are bad news for Democrats. Over the decade, state House districts now held by Democrats lost a combined total of 87,000 people. Republican-controlled districts, on the other hand, gained nearly half a million people. Dozens of districts reflect that pattern. The clear trend is that Republican-held areas are growing, while Democratic districts are losing people.

The biggest gainer over the decade is the district of House Minority Leader Tom Cross, a Republican from Oswego. It has grown so much that it has nearly enough residents for two separate House districts. And, since there are two House districts nested in each Senate district, it could have its own senator, too. Still, there is no guarantee that Democrats will simply divide Cross' current territory in two, especially if it means doubling the number of Republicans from that area in the Illinois House.

"The Democrats will do all they can to diminish the logical thought process ... that [the suburban growth] will benefit Republicans," Cross says.

Representative Mike Fortner, a West Chicago Republican heavily involved with

his caucus' redistricting efforts, says Kendall and Kane counties ought to get one new House seat apiece, while Will County should get two.

Fortner, though, worries that Democrats will divide up GOP territory to dilute new gains by Republicans. Gov. Pat Quinn recently signed a law designed to protect ethnic and language minorities from being split up, a reaction to the division of Chicago's Chinatown under last decade's Democratic-drawn map. Fortner says the same consideration should be applied to other communities, too. For example, he says, the city of Wheaton is now divided among four House seats.

But as Cross' district shows, another alternative for Democrats is simply to compete in the growing areas. After all, the people Cross represents in the House are represented by Democrat Linda Holmes in the Illinois Senate.

"It is possible that the people moving into those areas are not necessarily Republicans," notes House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie, a Chicago Democrat. The influx of Hispanics could help Democrats counter growth in Republican districts, especially in areas such as Elgin and Aurora, where Democrats have already made inroads. For example, Democratic Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia represents an Aurora-based district that is paired with Cross' to make up Holmes' Senate district.

But for all the tricks and strategies that inevitably come as part of the redistricting process, the state and federal constitutions require that legislative districts represent roughly equal populations, and there is no getting around the fact that the population is moving away from the Democratic power base.

If that were not enough to keep Democratic map drawers awake at night, the erosion of population in Chicago also makes it more difficult for incumbent Democrats to hold on to their current territory. Chicago, for example, lost enough population that it reasonably could expect to lose at least one House seat and probably two. One way to protect city incumbents, of course, is to expand their districts into the suburbs. That, too, is an imperfect solution. It forces Democratic incumbents to reach out to new constituents, and often the territory they would expand into already belongs to suburban Democratic legislators.

"Demographically and in terms of mapmaking, it is a real, real challenge just to hold on to what [Democrats] have," says Rob Paral, a Chicago-area demographer who works with various nonprofits and government agencies. For political and legal reasons, Democrats probably want to keep the same number of black-majority districts, but that, too, becomes more difficult with fewer blacks in the city, he adds.

Daniel C. Vock

Population growth and the legislature

Biggest winners

House Tom Cross, R-Oswego, 91.9 percent
Kay Hatcher, R-Yorkville, 70 percent
Tim Schmitz, R-Batavia, 46.4 percent
Renee Kosel, R-New Lenox, 35 percent
Emily McAsey, D-Lockport, 32.5 percent

Senate Linda Holmes, D-Aurora, 60.4 percent
Chris Lauzen, R-Aurora, 58.2 percent
Pamela Althoff, R-McHenry, 21 percent
A.J. Wilhelmi, D-Joliet, 20.1 percent
Christine Radogno, R-Lemont, 19.2 percent

Biggest losers

House Esther Golar, D-Chicago, -17.4 percent
B. Flynn Currie, D-Chicago, -13.4 percent
Edward Acevedo, D-Chicago, -12.7 percent
Cynthia Soto, D-Chicago, -12.1 percent
Deborah Mell, D-Chicago, -11.9 percent

Senate Iris Martinez, D-Chicago, -10.7 percent
Heather Steans, D-Chicago, -10.6 percent
Donne Trotter, D-Chicago, -10.1 percent
Mattie Hunter, D-Chicago, -10 percent
Emil Jones III, D-Chicago, -9.3 percent

Note: Republicans control 32 House districts and 18 Senate districts that gained population, and 21 House districts and six Senate districts that lost residents. Democrats control 22 House districts and 10 Senate districts that gained residents, and 41 House districts and 25 Senate districts that lost population.

Institution in Washington, D.C. But that trend was especially pronounced in Chicago. In fact, Frey notes, Chicago lost more blacks than any city but Detroit.

The departing African-American inhabitants account for almost all of Chicago's population drop in the last decade. The city's numbers dropped by roughly 200,000 people; blacks accounted for 180,000 of them.

Demographers are still waiting for more data from the census Bureau to determine where exactly those blacks moved to, but Frey says evidence suggests they headed both to the Chicago suburbs and to the Sun Belt. In essence, they are following the same pattern of "white flight" that white city dwellers took half a century ago. Now, he says, it is a younger generation of black middle-class families leaving cities to find better jobs, schools and neighborhoods in the suburbs and in the sunshine.

The decline in Chicago's population is especially jarring because Chicago showed a slight rebound in population during the last census, says Richard Greene, a geography professor at Northern Illinois University. An influx of young professionals and empty-nesters in the 1990s boosted the city's numbers for the first time since the 1950s, but the activity in gentrifying neighborhoods masked the simultaneous movement away from the city's south and west sides, Greene says. That trend of leaving the city's poorer neighborhoods only accelerated during the housing boom of the 2000s, when new housing was plentiful outside the city and interest rates for mortgages were low.

Of course, the housing boom affected the entire Chicago region. The cities that did the best during the decade, Greene says, were the ones that had space around their borders to expand and incorporate new subdivisions. That is why, he explains, Aurora grew so much faster than its hemmed-in neighbor, Naperville. In the previous decade, both west suburbs gobbled up territory and chalked up population gains. But over the past 10 years, Aurora added more than 55,000 people and became Illinois' second-largest city, while Naperville's growth trajectory leveled out.

By and large, DuPage County, where most of Naperville is located, is built-out. Developers and home buyers have had to venture farther from the city to get good deals on land. They are spreading out from the city — and established suburbs — in almost every direction. The "ring around the collar" starts in the north around Racine, Wis. Once in Illinois, it arcs into Boone County just outside Rockford, sweeps through the Fox River Valley and moves south through Grundy and Will counties. It is even pushing growth in the northwestern corner of Indiana.

Besides room to expand, other factors that determined which localities grew the most included their ability to attract Hispanic families, access to transportation and housing affordability, Greene says.

The growth among Latinos is especially noteworthy. Throughout the United States, new immigrants are no longer going directly to traditional gateway cities, such as Chicago and New York. Instead, they are joining family and friends in places where jobs are available.

The numbers of Hispanics are swelling, not just because of immigration, but because they tend to have more children than the general population. In Illinois, the growth is especially pronounced in such communities as Elgin and Aurora. While Hispan-

Illinois census data

Total population 12.8 million, 3.3 percent increase

White 71.5 percent, .6 percent increase

*** Hispanic** 15.8 percent, 32.5 percent increase

Black 14.5 percent, -.6 percent decrease

American Indian and Alaska native .3 percent, 41.8 percent increase

Asian 4.6 percent, 38.6 percent increase

Some other race 6.7 percent, 19.2 percent increase

Two or more races 2.3 percent, 23.4 percent increase

* not considered a race

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

ics make up 15 percent of the U.S. population as a whole, Greene points out, Kane County's residents are 31 percent Latino.

In Chicago, where the population is shrinking, House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie says she was "very surprised" by the numbers that showed her district, which stretches south along the lakefront from Hyde Park, has the second-largest population decline in the state.

The impact of the migration is already showing up in Chicago schools. Over the past decade, the number of school-age children in the city has dropped by 10 percent. But the number of school-age children living in poverty actually has increased. Both the drop in enrollment and the increase in poor students affect the funding Chicago's public schools receive. At a more basic level, though, it means teachers and administrators are dealing with poorer students every day.

Meanwhile, Chicago schools, like many throughout the state, also have a higher percentage of students who need help learning the English language. Data from the state indicates that the number of English language learners in Chicago Public Schools jumped 10 percent in the past two years. All told, some 61,000 students of roughly 409,000 in the district are acquiring English.

It is a challenge familiar to school administrators throughout the region. Kankakee's schools saw their number of English language learners more than double in the past two years. Schools from Park Ridge, Berwyn, Glendale Heights, North Chicago and, yes, Oswego have seen large increases in recent years, too, pushing up demand for new bilingual teachers and prompting some districts to look abroad for instructors at the same time they are struggling just to meet their payrolls.

Of course, where subdivisions are built, new schools are sure to follow. Even though the economic downturn put a damper on the number of people buying new houses in Kendall County, schools there still face higher enrollments because the families that already moved in are having more kids, House Republican Leader Tom Cross of Oswego points out.



A new subdivision in the growing Kendall County village of Oswego, where population has more than doubled since 2000



The Hispanic population in Illinois has grown by 32.5 percent since 2000.

In fact, new development demands new infrastructure of all kinds, not just more classrooms. It is one reason capital construction bills are popular among suburban lawmakers.

One of the key drivers of the growth, after all, is easy access to transportation, especially interstate highways. But as more people move in, the roads get crowded. One of the top priorities for elected officials in the suburbs is to alleviate that congestion. In an interview, Cross easily ticks off a number of road widenings the state has recently completed in and around his fast-growing district — and several more he wants to see. State Sen. Linda Holmes, an Aurora Democrat, stresses what a “huge” issue bringing Metra commuter rail service to Oswego has been. State Rep. Mike Fortner, a Republican who once served as West Chicago’s mayor, says lawmakers are even pushing for Amtrak service to Rockford and passenger rail to LaSalle.

For the time being, though, policymakers ought to concentrate on maintaining existing infrastructure, argues Josh Ellis, a project manager for the Metropolitan Planning Council in Chicago. The most likely improvements for commuter rail, he says, would be more frequent service or more stops on existing routes. Another option for relieving congestion would be using Interstate 55 as a transit corridor, where express buses would run down the median or on the shoulder. “As a function of the federal, state and local economies,” he explains, “the idea of new highways and new train lines is not at the forefront of people’s minds.”

One of the most significant but least visible changes is the settling of suburbanites in areas outside the Lake Michigan watershed. In fact, of the 20 Chicago-area municipalities that grew the fastest last decade, 15 do not get their water from Lake Michigan, according to the Metropolitan Planning Council.

That is significant because federal law caps how much water Illinois can draw from the Great Lakes. In practice, that means new areas must rely on river water and underground aquifers to water their lawns and cook their food. Those sources, though, are more susceptible to seasonal droughts and to contamination of

radium, barium and arsenic than Lake Michigan water.

Mary Sue Barrett, the council’s president, says the expanding footprint of the suburbs is a problem even for communities that already draw their water from Lake Michigan. Towns that depend on the Fox River or Kankakee River care deeply about what is happening upstream from them, particularly how much water other towns are returning to the river and how polluted that water is.

Local leaders in the distant suburbs also may develop contingency plans for using Lake Michigan water in cases of extreme shortages. But the only way there would be enough Great Lakes water available under the federal cap, Barrett explains, is if the communities that now use it conserve more of it or return more of it to Lake Michigan.

Holmes wrestled with the issue when she sat on the Kane County Board before becoming a state senator. The county conducted a three-year study on drinking water and concluded the area will face a “serious crisis” in the next 20 years, she recalls.

But it is just one of the issues highlighted by the census that she grapples with every day. Her booming district makes the task of going door-to-door for votes more difficult, she jokes, but the more serious concerns involve relieving traffic congestion, finding English teachers and making sure that new hospitals are built in the area.

The growth that boosted the local economy is a boon to her district, she says, but she worries that, as the census indicated, it is a mixed blessing for the state.

“If you’re in a growing community, you’re creating jobs. That is such a huge plus, especially with where the economy is,” Holmes says. “But … you really don’t want population fleeing out of your cities. The more you have houses that are not being lived in and businesses that are no longer occupied and empty storefronts, it’s an economic drain.”

Daniel C. Vock is a Washington, D.C.-based writer for Stateline.org.

Freedom of information

Lawmakers weigh the public's right to know versus the burden on local governments

by Jamey Dunn

Illinois Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno has her job today in part because of the roadblocks that citizens can sometimes face when using the state's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which allows access to public records to squeeze information out of a government entity.

In the mid-1980s, before Radogno had begun a political career, the Illinois village she lived in was looking to promote development through a special tax district. She read about the plan in the local paper. It also called for moving a fire station, which piqued her interest. "As I dug more into it, I had a lot of questions. ... I started to go to meetings and asked questions and was always treated a little bit patronizingly. And then I realized I could actually go and ask for documents, and then I started to do that."

She says, "They were not very friendly about it." Radogno says in the end she got the information she sought but had to be very persistent in her pursuit, submitting about 50 requests. She noted that none of the officials she butted heads with then are still working in the municipality today.

"Eventually I got everything, and it wasn't a horrible experience. But I can

easily see from that experience how you can get a government body to sort of just close ranks around anyone who wants to question them." Radogno says the experience inspired her to get involved in government, and she went on to become a member of the LaGrange Village Board in 1989.

However, Radogno says there are cases when small governments are inundated with record requests, from businesses seeking public information for marketing purposes to individuals attempting to harass municipalities rather than expose corruption or find out more about local issues. "I absolutely agree we need to find some sort of relief valve for those communities."

Less than a year after Gov. Pat Quinn signed FOIA reforms into law, legislators voted to exempt public employee evaluations from being available to the public. The move had enough support in the legislature to override a veto from Quinn that would have seriously limited the exemption. This legislative session, lawmakers are debating what information Illinois residents can expect to remain private. Some are also searching for what they call a middle ground between keeping government open and having realistic expectations of local municipalities that in some cases are understaffed and strapped for resources after the recent economic downturn.

The General Assembly reworked Illinois' Freedom of Information Act with an eye toward reform after impeaching former Gov. Rod Blagojevich and removing him from office. The FOIA changes came along with other attempts at cleaning up a government — such as setting limits on campaign contributions — that had become mired in political scandal. The changes required public bodies to respond to requests for information in five days instead of the previous seven-day requirement. They limited what could be exempted from release and set a higher standard of proof for denials of requests.

Public bodies must designate an officer who handles FOIA requests, and that person must receive training on the state's FOIA law as well as the Open Meetings Act, which sets out requirements for governmental bodies to hold meetings that are accessible to the public. The law also created the position of public access counselor in the attorney general's office. The access counselor has subpoena power and can issue binding decisions in FOIA disputes.

The changes were lauded by many as a positive step toward increased transparency in a state that had earned a reputation for corruption and government secrecy. David Yepsen, director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, says that Illinois' public sector needed to let in some sunlight to rehabilitate its tarnished reputation. "Governments in Illinois are held in pretty low regard, and they need to bend over backwards to restore credibility."

However, local government leaders from cities, villages and counties warned when Quinn signed the measure in the summer of 2009 that the new requirements were overly burdensome and would lead to confusion, inability to meet requests and, in perhaps the most dire admonition, collapse of the system through which the public can demand information of its government. "The consensus outcome predicted by many public officials who actually deal with this law at the countertop transaction level is that this system is likely to crumble under its own weight. One thing is certain — the bill makes FOIA a legal thicket that will overwhelm the lay people who are charged with dealing with FOIA requests on a day-to-day basis," Larry Frang, executive

director of the Illinois Municipal League, wrote in a letter to Quinn after lawmakers approved the reform legislation.

Public bodies can deny information requests for a number of reasons, including those that cause an "unwarranted invasion of personal privacy," "endanger the life or physical safety of law enforcement or corrections personnel or any other person," or "unduly burden public resources." The debate over defining those exemptions is at the core of several bills being considered by lawmakers that would roll back some FOIA requirements.

The Illinois State Police denied a request by the Associated Press for information from Firearm Owner's Identification (FOID) cards that Illinois residents must have to legally own a gun in the state. The state police argued that releasing the information was an invasion of privacy and could threaten the safety of FOID card-holders.

Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office disagreed, telling the state police they must respond to the request, which sought card-holders' names and the expiration dates of their permits, but no personal information, such as addresses or mental health records. Assistant Public Access Counselor Matthew Rogina wrote in a letter to the state police that the requests did not cross the line on privacy or personal safety and that it is in the public interest to allow access to the FOID registry to monitor the system and ensure that it is being administered properly.

Some lawmakers disagree with Rogina's assessment and the Illinois House passed a bill that would exempt the FOID records of at least 1.3 million Illinois residents registered to own a gun in the state from FOIA requests. Opponents argue that releasing information on who does or does not own guns in the state could be a potential boon to criminals seeking to rob the homes of the unarmed or those looking to steal guns. They say public release of the FOID list may cause some gun owners to skip registration altogether.

"I believe that the attorney general's opinion is against the public safety of the state, it puts more illegal guns on the street and it would lead to more straw purchases and noncompliance," Sen. Kirk Dillard, a Hinsdale Republican and sponsor of a similar bill that would exempt FOID information, told *Illinois Issues* a week after the

The changes were lauded by many as a positive step toward increased transparency in a state that had earned a reputation for corruption and government secrecy.

letter from Madigan's office made headlines.

"You have to make a pretty compelling reasoned case for why something like that needs to be secret," says Yepsen. He adds that security has become a greater concern for public bodies since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and information that had been public, such as floor plans for security sensitive buildings, may have to be shielded. "This is not something that you set in stone forever. So I think you have to be willing to hear arguments." But he says that other licensing systems administered by the state are open to review, and the only way the public can know whether the state police are keeping tabs on which residents are eligible for gun ownership is by making some FOID information available. "You have to be able to see how it works in order to monitor it."

Other lawmakers are pushing changes to FOIA because they say local governments are finding it difficult to meet the demands placed on them as they face strained budgets, low staffing levels and overdue payments from the state. Rep. Jim Durkin, a Western Springs Republican, is sponsoring a bill that would allow public entities to skip making hard copies of information, as long as they provide it online. "It's strictly a money-saving issue," he says. "I think that [people requesting documents that are available online] should be told: 'This is accessible. Go to a computer, and you can download and print it. Good luck.'"

Durkin says that the move would encourage public bodies to share more information online and allow citizens to get documents instantly instead of having to wait for them to be compiled and copied. "I understand that not everyone

has access to computers but more and more people do. I would say more people have computers than don't have computers."

Under another bill, if any individual made more than 48 requests in a year or more than five in a single week to the same public body, any subsequent requests would be labeled as vexatious, and the body would have 21 days to respond. Requests from members of the media would be exempt under the proposal. The law currently requires a response within five days. The bill would also prohibit the public access counselor from weighing in on any vexatious requests.

Sen. Edward Maloney says he is sponsoring the bill after receiving complaints from officials serving in small governments that were being inundated with requests that required the production of a large number of copies. Maloney, a Democrat from Chicago, says in one case, a cubic foot of paper was never retrieved by the person who made the request. According to supporters of the measure, many of the requests are motivated by political grudges or made by businesses looking to find new customers, such as companies that sell construction materials seeking records of building permits.

"The way it's set up now, any individual can basically use this law as a weapon against a municipality if they so choose. Some of these individuals are past political candidates. Some of them are just, I don't know, ticked off about something. And that's all it takes," says Patrick Kitching, mayor of southwest suburban Alsip. "This is wrecking our budget among other things. We're a small- to medium-size village. We don't have anybody sitting around on their hands that can do this. My deputy clerk has threatened to quit on multiple occasions."

David Morrison, deputy director of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, says that the motivation of the request should have no bearing on whether it is filled. He says local governments already have the tools to avoid overly burdensome appeals for information by asking the requester to narrow the focus of the demand, denying it under the parameters set out by the law or appealing to the

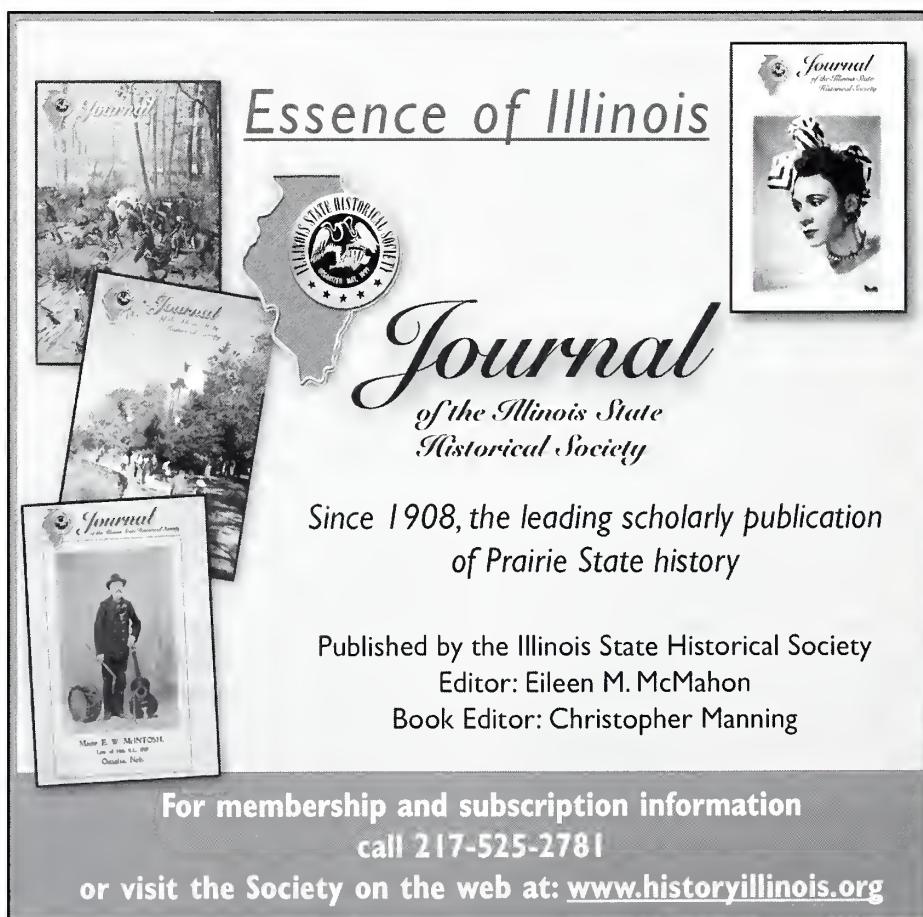
public access counselor. "I found it hard to believe that these requests are so onerous and so difficult that we need the change in the law that they're pushing for."

Lawmakers are also considering allowing governments seven days, the period given before the recent reform law, instead of five days to respond to a request and letting them charge more for copies of documents. Hanke Gratteau, a member of Quinn's Illinois Reform Commission and a former investigative reporter and managing editor for the *Chicago Tribune*, argues that public bodies often don't respond on time to requests, so no matter what the deadline is in law, in practice it is longer. "Anyone who has tried to use the FOIA to obtain documents knows that seven days isn't really seven days. It's far longer than that."

Kent Redfield, an emeritus professor at the University of Illinois Springfield and director of the Sunshine Project, says proponents of legislation to limit FOIA are using budget concerns as a political gimmick. "It's strategy...[to] link your

issue to whatever is a major public policy concern. So this session, everything has budget implications." He says while the proposed changes may save some money, it would not be enough to save struggling local budgets. Gratteau says openness is a vital service required of government, not a fringe benefit that can be trimmed when money is tight. "[Providing] open and easy access to information that rightfully belongs to the public is part of the job. It's not an added luxury."

Redfield adds that there is no way to strike a perfect balance in which well-intended watchdogs get what information they seek while governments avoid requests from those who may be seeking political revenge or acting with some other perceived time-wasting motive. "Ultimately, you have to come down on one side or the other. Do the documents or the process exist to serve the public or do they exist to serve the politicians and the bureaucrats? ... You can't have it both ways. You either have to have a presumption in favor of transparency and the public interest or a presumption to the convenience of local governments." □



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Abortion rights fight

The battle has shifted to laws impacting access to the procedure

by Lauren N. Johnson

When the federal government was on the brink of a shutdown in April, the major sticking point was a proposed funding cut to abortion providers.

The battle over abortion, which has focused on the 1973 United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, has in recent years shifted toward regulating access to the procedure. Abortion rights advocates say those opposed to abortion are launching subtle attempts to make the procedure less accessible by seeking to impose stronger regulations and to cut funding to health facilities that offer abortion.

Colleen Connell, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, says, "We recognize and object to the fact that women's health [care] generally, and women's reproductive health specifically, is under attack both nationally and here in the state of Illinois."

Nationwide, state legislators are considering laws that would more strictly regulate abortion. Such measures are supported by groups that have historically opposed abortion. However, lawmakers backing the bills say their main goals are to increase transparency, encourage communication between physicians and female patients, promote safety and preserve lives.

Harrisburg Democratic Rep. Brandon Phelps says the bill he is sponsoring, which would require abortion providers to offer women a chance to look at an ultrasound image before having the procedure, would do only that. "Right now, if you have an abortion, the ultrasound is a

requirement. We're just asking the woman if she wants to see it. We're not forcing anything."

Bishop Thomas John Paprocki of the Springfield Roman Catholic Diocese says: "We know this is a difficult decision, and we all know why having all the facts from the outset before making such a difficult decision is so imperative. ... The state has a vested interest in protecting life, and these ultrasounds do exactly that."

The bishop acknowledges that abortion rights advocates view the legislation as an effort to persuade women not to have abortions. "Those who support abortions will see this as an impediment, and in a sense it is. Our focus is on preserving life. It's important that in this society that endorses choice, these expectant mothers have another choice, to see their baby." He says reducing the number of abortions would be a positive outcome that people on both sides of the issue should support. "That's a goal that even our critics must acknowledge as being worthwhile."

Those pushing for tighter regulation of clinics say they are trying to protect the health and safety of the mother, especially in light of such stories as a Philadelphia clinic that recently made grisly national headlines. Dr. Kermit Gosnell racked up 15 malpractice-related suits, allegedly murdered two women and countless fetuses and severely injured some of his patients between 2002 and 2010, according to a Pennsylvania grand jury report. Gosnell's clinic, Women's Medical Society, which served low income and immi-

grant populations, was closed, and he was indicted on eight counts of murder in the deaths of seven infants and a Nepalese refugee who died after high doses of anesthetic during a late-term abortion in 2009.

"Abortions are the most under-regulated medical procedure in America. The abortion industry says that they want abortions safe, but then they fight all legislation to make them safe," says Kristi Hamrick, spokeswoman for Americans United for Life, a national anti-abortion advocacy group. According to Melaney Arnold, a spokeswoman for the Illinois Department of Public Health, no Illinois clinics that practice abortions have been cited for a violation since 2004.

Advocates for abortion rights, however, say limiting access can also contribute to scenarios like the case in Philadelphia by potentially driving low-income women to any provider they can find. In some cases, those providers can be dishonest or down-right criminal. They argue that without the choice to obtain the service, bad physicians who participate in horrific medical behavior can have a monopoly on the practice of abortions in any given area. So a balance must be struck between requirements that would make clinics safe and blanket regulations that will drive providers out of business. "When you're regulating abortion, you ought to have regulations that are calibrated to that procedure," Connell says.

Rep. Elaine Nekritz, a Northbrook Democrat, agrees. "If this is truly about protecting public health, then let's make it

apply to every kind of procedure." She filed an amendment to **House Bill 3156** that would require any medical clinic that

performs more than 50 minor surgical procedures a year to follow the same standards set by the original bill, which

specified clinics performing 50 or more abortions a year. The standards included licensing through quarterly compliance checks, requiring that halls and doors be wide enough for patient transportation and using washable ceilings in the procedure and recovery rooms.

Chicago Democratic Rep. Barbara Flynn Currie estimates that the cost of bringing the clinics up to the standards in the bill would be between \$1 million and \$2 million per clinic.

"The point of this bill is to close the clinics. The point of this bill is to make legal abortion...in Illinois unavailable and inaccessible. Should this bill become law...you will find women who have no other options turning to the dangerous back-alley abortions that were common in the state and in this country before *Roe v. Wade*.

"This is an underhanded effort to shut down abortion. It has nothing to do with patient safety."

Rep. Darlene Senger, a Naperville Republican and the sponsor of the bill, says her measure is not meant to make things fiscally difficult for abortion clinics. "All this is doing is making sure that if you're going to have an abortion, that it's done in a building that's a safe location."

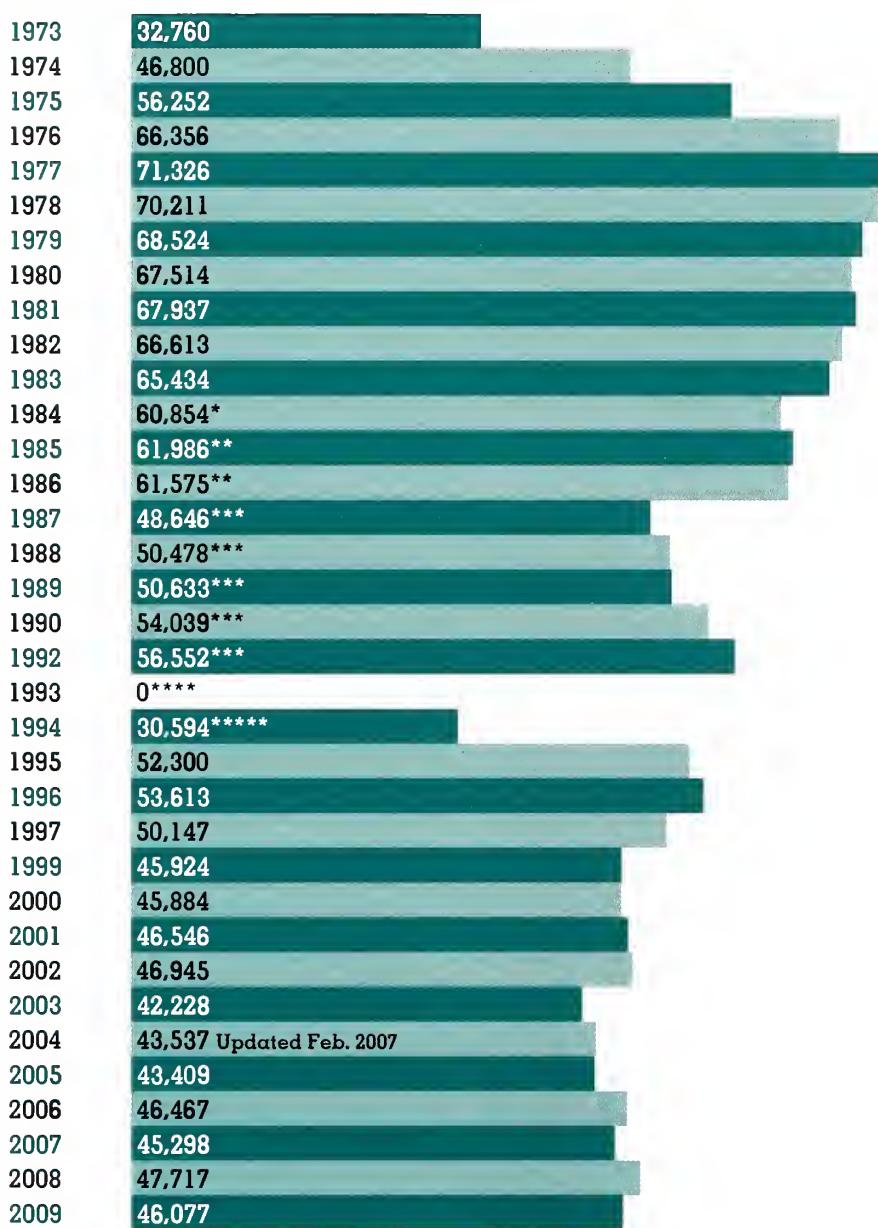
Peter Breen, executive director of the Thomas More Society, an anti-abortion law center, says more than half of the abortion clinics in the state that currently perform general anesthesia procedures are not licensed. "Women are not livestock — we completely agree — which is why they shouldn't be treated like that. They should be treated to the appropriate standards of surgical care," Breen says. The reference to livestock was in response to abortion rights groups' complaints about abortion-related issues going before the House Agricultural Committee.

Connell of the ACLU cites a 21-year-old court case, *Ragsdale v. Turnock*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately upheld that medical regulations overseen by the Department of Public Health were valid. "For the sponsor of this bill [Senger] to claim that there are loopholes that essentially leave abortion clinics without regulations is quite frankly false," she says.

According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute, a New York-based sexual and reproductive health research organization, in 2008, 92 percent of Illinois counties had

ILLINOIS ABORTION STATISTICS 1973-2009

YEAR NUMBER OF ABORTIONS



* Based on 9 1/2 months of reported data.

** Since the Illinois Department of Public Health was prohibited from mandating abortion reporting by a temporary restraining order issued in 1984, these numbers were generated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) from voluntary reports submitted by Illinois abortion facilities.

*** In 1987, CDC turned over the annual voluntary survey of facilities performing abortions to the IPDH.

**** No data collected.

***** A settlement to the 1984 temporary restraining order was reached in the fall of 1993 that allowed Illinois to resume mandatory reporting of abortions. In May 1994, health care providers were notified of the settlement and the department outlined reporting requirements, including instructions that information on all procedures from Jan. 1, 1994, be submitted. However, since only about 1,000 abortion reports were received for the first four months of the year, data for 1994 should be considered incomplete.

no designated abortion provider. IDPH's Arnold says four counties — Peoria, Winnebago, DuPage and Cook — have clinics currently licensed under the department's standards. Physicians at other clinics can administer the procedure but then must report to the state.

Recently, dollars spent on family planning services other than abortion, services such as providing contraception and screening for sexually transmitted diseases, have become a target. Such reductions often have a stronger impact on low-income women, who can't afford treatment.

In Illinois in 2008, publicly funded clinics averted 44,000 pregnancies and 18,400 abortions, according to the Guttmacher Institute.

Nationally, 1.2 million American women obtained abortions in 2008, of which 42 percent had incomes that on average were 100 percent below the federal poverty level, or \$10,830.

Cuts to family planning would deny 60 percent of the patients, or nearly 40,000 Illinoisans, who rely on the group for primary health care and contraceptives, says Lara Philipps, a spokeswoman for Planned Parenthood of Illinois, a reproductive health care provider.

Currently, federal funds are prohibited from being used to pay for abortions except in the cases of rape, incest or danger to the woman's health. Pam Sutherland, vice president of public policy for Planned Parenthood of Illinois, says there are few reported cases of pregnancy through rape or incest in the state, probably fewer than 10 a year.

Planned Parenthood of America operates more than 800 family planning clinics and received \$362 million in federal assistance last year, may suffer ultimately under this scenario.

Anti-abortion groups argue that health care providers that offer abortions could use loopholes to fund the procedures at taxpayers' expense. Hamrick says: "This is apples and oranges when we say that, because the abortion industry believes that [abortion] is a constitutional right, then it must be funded. ... You have a right to vote, but you don't have a right to cab fare at government expense to get to the polling place." Some groups argue that they are not trying to take away the right to abortion, only the funding.



Activists from the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois gathered in Springfield to protest bills on reproductive health care, including three that were heard in the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee. The T-shirts reflect the campaign, 'Women are not livestock.'

Those in the U.S. House who are backing the cuts say federal dollars given to family planning organizations such as Planned Parenthood free up other funds to be spent on abortions. "I'm pro-life; I don't apologize for it. I also think it's morally wrong to take the tax dollars of millions of pro-life Americans and use it to fund abortion providers," U.S. Rep. Mike Pence of Indiana said on the ABC News program *This Week*. An amendment he tacked on to a House budget bill that would have cut all federal funding to Planned Parenthood passed in the U.S. House with bipartisan support.

Health care providers rely heavily on Title X, a family planning federal grant program that was enacted three years prior to *Roe v. Wade*, to provide low-income and uninsured families with family planning and preventive health care. Congress spent at least \$317 million for Title X last year. In April, the debate over Title X funding became a key part of contentious federal budget negotiations that nearly led to a shutdown of federal operations.

"What Mike and his colleagues tried to do is use a funding bill, a spending bill, to impose changes in law that should be debated, but not as part of this effort," Maryland Rep. Chris Van Hollen, the top Democrat on the House budget committee, said on *This Week*. "These guys took this to the brink ... to impose their own sort of right wing policies on the country. We can disagree about a very controversial issue, and we do, but using this budget process to try to impose that position

on the country and threaten to shut down the government is just wrong."

Illinois U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin says the proposed Republican cut in Title X funding was shortsighted and went too far.

Family planning organizations face a reduction in state funding, as well. Gov. Pat Quinn proposed eliminating funding for family planning services in his budget plan for fiscal year 2012.

Several attempts to contact the Quinn administration about the proposed cut were not returned.

"To lose \$700,000, it means there will be hundreds of women who won't receive family planning services," says Sutherland of Planned Parenthood of Illinois. In 2009, the Illinois Department of Human Services estimates that its family planning program — which includes health departments, Planned Parenthood agencies, hospital-based clinics, single service non-for-profit agencies, federally qualified health centers and community-based organizations — prevented 24,749 pregnancies and 3,477 abortions.

Planned Parenthood, which serves more than 60,000 patients in Illinois, received \$2.4 million in state and federal funding through the Department of Human Services this fiscal year, Sutherland says. Brigid Leahy, a spokeswoman for Planned Parenthood, says, "I know for women who come to Planned Parenthood who are in the family planning program, we learn regularly that we are the only ones providing health care to these women ... so we're sort of the last line of defense." □

Empty offices

Facing pension cuts and election complexity, some county clerks choose to retire

by Kenneth Lowe

For Rebecca Kraemer, it was time to move on. Retirement didn't just mean leaving her job. She had a 40-year-old adult daughter with cerebral palsy living at home, and finishing her career meant being able to do "girly stuff" together after years of a demanding occupation that, as she put it, never really went from 8 to 4.

"I was just turning 62 the same month as the election and just thought, 'It's time to pass it on,'" she says.

Kraemer's 40 years in the Edgar County Clerk's Office — 20 of them as county clerk — came to an end last year when she finished her fifth term and chose to retire rather than seek re-election.

She was one of at least 14 county clerks throughout the state to retire last year. Other incumbent clerks were defeated in the 2010 election, as well, bringing the total turnover to 19. At a time when elections have become more complicated and election judges more scarce, nearly a fifth of the 102 county clerks who organize elections have departed.

Like the others who left at about the same time she did, Kraemer oversaw the electoral process in the precincts and polling places of Edgar County in the days leading up to and following Election Day, organized election judges, prepared voting machines, established new precincts or consolidated thin ones and tabulated the votes for all offices local, state and federal. She was responsible for the logistics of the electoral process on the ground level.

In those four decades, she says, that process has undergone positive changes,

but it also has become harder and harder to run for the county clerks who oversee the day-to-day logistics.

Despite those increasing complexities, and in the midst of an election season in Illinois marked by hair-thin margins and crass campaigning, Kraemer's pay was cut. Her departure coincided with a nearly 60 percent cut to the stipend that county clerks receive from the Illinois State Board of Elections as compensation for administering elections.

"I was very concerned when they discussed reducing the stipend," Kraemer says. "That's 15 percent of my income. I didn't retire because of that, but it was a concern. It amounted to quite a bit of money."

The stipend, normally \$6,500, was reduced to \$2,724.66 this fiscal year. The State Board of Elections reduced the payment because its funding for grants and awards was cut more than 55 percent, says Rupert Borgsmiller, the board's executive director. The fund pays for election necessities, such as the stipend for clerks and expenses for election judges.

"We've used the money as best we can to meet what our requirements are," Borgsmiller says. "It wasn't an easy decision for the board to make not to pay the stipends at the full price, but when we have less money to utilize, we have to make what we feel are the appropriate choices on how to spend the money."

For county clerks in smaller counties, that can be a significant reduction in pay.

It's also a pay cut that counts against their pension calculations.

Kerry Hirtzel, Effingham county clerk and president of the Illinois Association of County Clerks and Recorders, says the number of clerks who retired was relatively high last year. He said the discussions leading up to the stipend cut had a number of county clerks in his area of the state considering exactly when they should step down, but he added that many of those clerks were at retirement age.

"That was an issue for some people who weren't sure if they should retire in the middle of the year or the end of the year," Hirtzel says. "Most of those were retiring just because of longevity, the time they put in. It was an age factor."

Despite that, there's a perception among some county clerks that the stipend cut and the possibility of a resultant pension loss was a major factor. It's a concern that Jackson County Clerk Larry Reinhardt says many clerks have as they consider what their pensions will look like in the coming years.

"If someone waits and that stipend is completely cut, it's going to affect their pension for the rest of their life," Reinhardt says. "A lot of people elected to bail now while they could still lock their pension in at the full amount in the fear that it may very well come down."

Cass County Clerk Mike Kirchner says that the de facto pay cut comes along with pay freezes that have been in place in many counties.

"Those people are not only being frozen for four years, but if this gets cut on top of it, you see the dynamics of it," Kirchner says. "They're going to be getting less money for the rest of their lives."

Kirchner says a worry is that those officials with long experience and expertise might see the situation as a disincentive to remain.

"If you've got a wealth of these election officials who bring a wealth of information and experience who are planning on staying on, it almost gets to be: 'If I stay on another four years, I may be reducing my pension forever,'" he says. "We will miss the experience and the history that some of those old, experienced clerks took with them."

The stipend originally came about as a means to compensate county clerks for their role in handling the odd-year, "consolidated" elections that decide who will serve in municipal offices and on school boards and other local entities. Before the 1980s, elections for those offices were carried out separately. The General Assembly then moved to bring all the elections under county government and accordingly issued a stipend to compensate clerks for the extra workload.

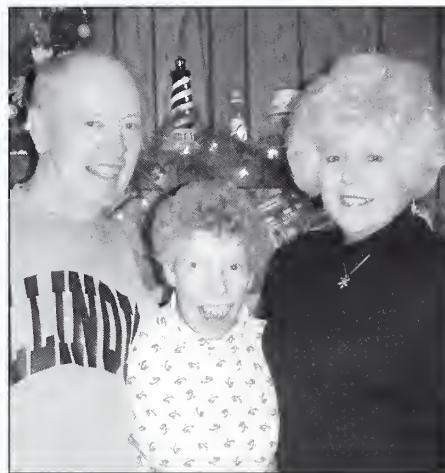
"The stipend kind of eased the pain," Kraemer says. "Consolidation is good in a number of ways. It was intended to save taxpayers money, and probably, in the long run, for all jurisdictions concerned, it did."

Kraemer says the General Assembly's cuts to the Board of Elections have trickle-down effects on local county boards and election authorities that legislators may not understand.

"I'm concerned that there are so many legislators who weren't there and don't understand why that stipend was given in the first place," Kraemer says. "They tend to forget that even though the statute says that the county boards, when they're setting salaries, aren't supposed to look at those stipends, they all do."

And at the same time the Board of Elections faces drastic cuts that are trickling down to the men and women who oversee the fine details of running elections, some county clerks also are expressing worries over the increasing degree of complexity involved in running those elections.

Reinhardt, Kraemer and others alluded to the sweeping changes brought about by



Rebecca Kraemer, right, with her husband, Keith and daughter, Kauai

the Help America Vote Act of 2002. The federal law, enacted largely over concerns that arose from the 2000 presidential election, made moves to replace punch card voting. Since then, election officials all over the country have been adopting electronic voting machines, which in turn have required more training, more preparation and more details on the day of the election.

Those advancements have placed more financial strain on counties and their election budgets, Kraemer says.

"Our demise, to me, was when we did away with punch card voting, because of the expense," she says. "Because of the expense of all the new equipment, we had to consolidate precincts into voting centers and issue a bond to pay for some of what we did."

Another thorny issue, she says, was training election judges and her staff—many of whom are elderly and not always technologically savvy—to use the new equipment.

"It was a complicated thing for judges to have to learn to do once or twice a year," Kraemer says. "That's created extra judge training, and they're still scratching their heads and intimidated by the electronics of it. When you look at the average age of judges, they're older than I am."

Hirtzel says he believes the increasing difficulty also could have been a factor in so many retirements.

"A big percentage of the work comes before Election Day now, making sure the equipment is up to snuff and ready to go," Hirtzel says. "I'm sure that had something to do with some people's [decisions to retire]."

Reinhardt says those changes have caused, for some, a feeling of unease that the process is starting to become too complex for them to track without making errors.

"Frankly, there are a lot of people who fear we're going to miss something," Reinhardt says. "It gets to the point you're fearful doing your job because there have been so many changes."

Borgsmiller says the Board of Elections is doing its best to continue to be good stewards of the electoral process. Cuts to the board's election funds aren't going to prevent it from running elections to the same standards, either, he says.

"People expect a good election, a well-conducted, accurate election," he says. "Nobody is going to sacrifice accuracy for anything."

In light of the relatively high number of clerks leaving this past year, those who remain have lamented the decades of experience the retirees have taken with them. The Association of County Clerks is also adjusting to the losses within its own organization, Hirtzel says. "As president this year, I have to put together a certain number of committees, and it's difficult because I'm not sure what types of expertise the new clerks bring," he says. The loss of experience within the association, he says, is "hard to replace."

Carroll County Clerk Brian Woessner, a zone leader in the organization who oversees northern Illinois counties, says the group's focus at its recent meeting was on educating new county clerks.

"The theme basically, was to try to mentor and get back to basics and get out a lot of basic information to help them get started, and I know that was well-appreciated and [well]-received," he says.

Reinhardt says despite the worries about a loss of institutional memory, he's met many of the newer county clerks and believes they're equal to the task.

"Any time you've got a brain drain, so to speak, in an organization, it's a concern," Reinhardt says. "I have met some of the clerks that have come in from both the political parties throughout the state, and we've got some very good people who have come in. They're young, energetic, intelligent, very aggressive and very willing to put in the extra effort." □

Kenneth Lowe is a City Hall and political reporter for the Decatur Herald & Review.

UIS gets a new chancellor

Susan Koch, provost and vice president for academic affairs at Northern Michigan University, will become chancellor at the University of Illinois Springfield and a vice president of the U of I system July 1.

She has been at NMU since 2007 and previously worked as associate provost and dean of the graduate college at the University of Northern Iowa. Koch will replace **Harry Berman**, interim vice president and chancellor. A 35-year veteran member of the UIS faculty and administration, Berman has served as interim chancellor since September.

U of I President Michael Hogan said in a prepared statement: "Dr. Koch's record reflects a proven appreciation for the value of a strong liberal arts education and a deep commitment to civic engagement. I couldn't be more pleased to have her joining our leadership team as we continue to advance the excellence of our Springfield campus and the entire university."

Koch, in a prepared statement, said: "I was drawn to the position because of the



Susan Koch

passion for excellence that is so evident at the University of Illinois and among the faculty, staff and students at UIS. I am delighted to have the opportunity to work with President Mike Hogan, who is an outstanding leader in higher education.

"With its strong reputation as a public liberal arts university, UIS is providing the state of Illinois with grad-

uates who have the knowledge, skills and values necessary to be productive contributors to and leaders of their communities," Koch said. She added that she and her husband are "looking forward to immersing ourselves in Abraham Lincoln's hometown and in the activities of a university where public affairs is so central to what we contribute to the state of Illinois, the nation and the world."

Koch, a health education scholar focusing on international education, conflict resolution and human rights, will hold a tenured faculty position in the College of Education and Human Services. She was co-founder of the Global Health Corps, an organization providing public health services.

A former high school teacher, Koch received a bachelor's degree in health/physical education/biology at Dakota State University. She has a master's degree and doctorate from the University of Northern Iowa in health education. Koch joined the faculty at UNI in 1985 and moved into administration in 1995.

UIS is one of three U of I campuses. It serves approximately 5,000 students.

Shifts at the top

Hiram Grau is Gov. Pat Quinn's selection as director of the Illinois State Police.

Grau was deputy chief of investigations for the Cook County state's attorney's office. Previously, he served 27 years with the Chicago Police Department. A decorated Vietnam War veteran, Grau received a master's degree in business administration from St. Xavier University in Chicago.

Quinn had appointed Jonathon Monken as director of state police in 2009. Monken's appointment was never considered by the state Senate, and in February, he was named head of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and confirmed by the Senate.

Joe Costigan is Quinn's choice as director of the Department of Labor. Costigan is the Chicago-based secretary-treasurer of Workers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union. Costigan is also a past vice president of the Illinois State AFL-CIO and

was on the staff of former Illinois House Speaker William Redmond.

Costigan replaces **Catherine Shannon**.

Gloria Materre has moved from the Illinois Housing Development Authority to the Illinois Liquor Control Commission, where she will be executive director. She will be responsible for implementing decisions on licensing, disciplinary measures and policy determinations for the seven-member commission. Materre replaces **Lainie Krozel**, who will return to the Illinois Department of Revenue to her position as chief of staff, which she has held since 2007, including while serving the commission.

An attorney, Materre served as executive director of the housing development authority and prior to that worked as deputy chief of staff under Quinn.

Materre holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a law degree from the University of Illinois College of Law.

Jim Underwood, who has been deputy director of the Capital Development Board's construction division, has been named the new CDB executive director by a unanimous vote of the board.

Underwood replaces acting CDB executive **Gus Behnke**, who had temporarily headed the agency following the retirement of former executive director **Jim Riemer**.

Underwood joined CDB in 2008 as deputy director of construction. Prior to that, he was chief executive officer of Illinois Correctional Industries from February 2003 to August 2008, personnel manager for the Department of Corrections from February 2003 to March 2004, and the Illinois Secretary of State's physical services construction division chief from January 2001 to January 2003. He received a bachelor's degree from the Antioch College AFL-CIO George Meany Center for Labor Studies.

The Capital Development Board is the construction management arm of Illinois state government.

Insurance director picked for federal job

Michael McRaith, director of the Illinois Department of Insurance, was tapped by the U.S. Treasury to run its newly created Federal Insurance Office.

McRaith will advise Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner on insurance issues. He is expected by early 2012 to report on how to modernize and improve insurance regulation. Prior to his appointment as state director, McRaith worked 15 years in private practice as an attorney in Chicago, representing national and regional financial institutions, including insurers.

McRaith received a bachelor's degree from Indiana University and a law degree from Loyola University School of Law in Chicago.

Gov. Pat Quinn says of McRaith: "He's a great public servant. He is a public interest advocate from the word go."



Michael McRaith

He says McRaith has been on the front line implementing the federal health care reform law in Illinois.

Quinn says he does not have immediate plans to name a replacement because he has some time to make a choice before McRaith leaves in June.

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<http://illinoisisssues.uis.edu>



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Correction

Democrats hold a 4-3 majority on the Illinois Supreme Court, not Republicans, as stated in the April Editor's Note column.

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Charles N. Wheeler III



Democrats likely to have a few tricks up their sleeves when drawing new legislative maps

by Charles N. Wheeler III

Illinois voters gave state Democrats an unprecedented opportunity in last November's election: the chance to draw new congressional and legislative districts as party mapmakers saw fit, presumably to guarantee party majorities for the next decade.

Never before since the U.S. Supreme Court imposed its one-person, one-vote redistricting standard in the 1960s has one party controlled both houses of the Illinois General Assembly and the governor's office heading into the legislative session following a federal census. The Democrats' good fortune was tempered a few months later, when the U.S. Census Bureau released the 2010 count. While Illinois' overall population grew by about 400,000 in the last decade, the growth was not uniform.

The Democratic stronghold of Chicago lost 200,000 residents, downstate counties grew by about that number, and the traditionally Republican-leaning collar counties gained roughly 400,000 residents, a 15 percent jump. (See "Spreading out," page 22.) As a result, 27 of the 35 Senate districts now in Democratic hands collectively fall some 250,000 residents below the new population target of almost 217,500 per district, including 10 city-based districts that are shy more than 20,000 population.

The numbers are much the same in the House, where 48 of the 64 Democrats are

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from districts with population numbers below the roughly 108,700 target. The total shortfall is almost 310,000 people, with 20 districts lacking more than 10,000.

Republicans, on the other hand, fare much better, with almost half of the GOP incumbents — 14 of 24 in the Senate and 24 of 54 in the House — with a surfeit of population.

So is it Mission Impossible for the Democratic cartographers, given the GOP-favoring numbers? Don't bet on it.

Ten years ago, when the luck of the draw gave Democrats a free hand to craft new district boundaries, the party mapmakers faced a similar situation: Roughly three-quarters of the state's 1 million population surge was in Chicago's suburbs, while the city grew only by about 112,000 and downstate by some 160,000. As a result, 72 of 89 incumbent Democrats were in districts needing to grow, a fate shared by just 48 of 88 Republicans.

Despite the discouraging numbers, Democrats used creative cartography to

fashion legislative maps that allowed them to elect majorities in both the Senate and the House in five straight elections, even notwithstanding the national Republican wave last November.

Reviewing how the mapmaking went 10 years ago should provide a rough guide of how Democrats will seek similar success in the next decade, despite census numbers that seemingly favor Republicans.

So how did they do it in 2001?

- By crafting Chicago and Cook County districts that ran far enough into GOP suburban territory to meet population targets without threatening Democratic control. Indeed, the current map includes 13 Senate districts and 21 House districts that overlap the city and adjacent suburbs, only three of which have GOP incumbents. Even House Speaker Michael J. Madigan hails from a district in which most 2010 voters were suburbanites.

Helping the Democrats create safe suburban districts in 2001 were the numbers of African-Americans who moved from the city's west and south sides into nearby suburbs, a migration that continues, providing Democrats with a generally reliable voter base in formerly GOP terrain.

Expect Democrats to use a similar ploy this year, pushing city-linked districts out even farther into the suburbs, thus in turn elbowing Democratic-held seats in south

and west Cook County out into the growing suburban areas.

Might this jeopardize Democratic control? Perhaps, but ...

• By taking advantage of the growing number of residents who identified themselves as Hispanics. The 2001 Democratic map used the roughly 625,000 increase in Latino residents to double the number of districts in which they composed the majority to four Senate and eight House districts, most rooted in Chicago but extending west and southwest to include suburban Hispanics.

While not as dramatic as recorded in 2000, Hispanic numbers grew by about 500,000 over the last decade, to more than 2 million statewide. Latinos now are the majority in four Senate districts — although short an average of 16,000 people each — and are between a quarter and a half of residents in an additional six districts. In the House, Hispanics are the majority in 10 House districts, all but one that are shy of population, and their numbers range from 49 percent to 25 percent in an additional 11.

All of the districts with significant Hispanic numbers are in the Chicago metropolitan area, including several in the collar counties. Given the historical pattern of Latino support for Democrats, fostered in part by the GOP hard-line on immigration issues, the Hispanic growth should provide some cushion as Democratic districts push out into the suburbs.

• By keeping large urban areas down-state in single House districts, rather than carving them up among several rural-dominated districts, as Republicans did when they had a free hand in drawing the boundaries in 1991.

Rockford, Springfield, Peoria and Champaign-Urbana each have more than enough residents for a single House district, as well as more Democratic voting habits than the surrounding countryside, so look for the Democratic map to draw House districts centered on each urban area. The mapmakers likely will follow the same pattern in the Metro East and Quad Cities, whose urban areas offer better Democratic prospects than the surrounding rural territory.

• By mapping incumbent Republicans into the same district, thus creating open districts that were easier for Democratic candidates to win. Democrats likely will use a similar tactic this time around, just as Republicans did when they controlled redistricting in 1991.

Using such tried-and-true tactics, Democratic mapmakers can be expected to meet their challenging task and produce new Senate and House maps for the Democrats' legislative majorities to approve and Gov. Pat Quinn to sign into law by the June 30 deadline set in the Illinois Constitution.

Republicans are certain to go to court to try to block the Democratic plan, but here, too, the Democrats have the edge. The Constitution gives "original and exclusive jurisdiction" on redistricting to the Illinois Supreme Court — four of whose seven justices are Democrats. □

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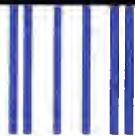
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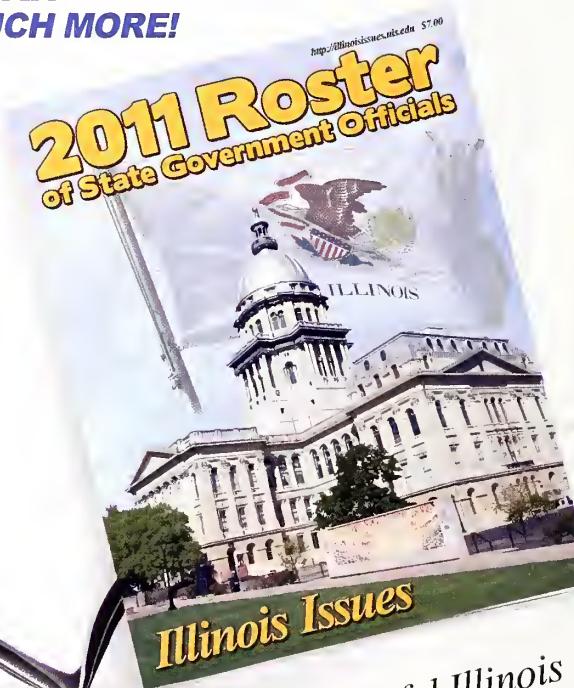
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